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THE ENEMY'S CAMP

CHAPTER XXXI

MR. LAURISTON had misgivings. Reason told him that the business on which he was engaged was to all intents and purposes military in character, but conscience refused to admit this definition of it, arguing that it was police-work pure and simple. It is all very well, said conscience, to crouch in a ditch looking for an enemy, because you know that the enemy is crouching in another ditch looking for you, or at any rate that, if he is not, he ought to be. Moreover in true military operations, when from the security of your ditch you have observed the head of the foe incautiously upraised from another ditch your duty is clear and simple; you at once retire on your main body with the valuable information you have acquired. Meanwhile your enemy has probably seen you getting out of your ditch, whereupon he gets out of his ditch and retires on his main body to report his valuable information; and so all is peace, for no good scout will sacrifice useful intelligence to the vain-glorious desire for an affair of outposts of which he may possibly not get the better.

Had Mr. Lauriston's instructions been merely to watch and, if he saw a person clad in a blue suit, brown boots, and a Panama hat, to retire on Charles and report the circumstance, conscience would have admitted that the affair wore a military complexion and was not derogatory to an ex-volunteer. But such had not been his orders. "If," Charles had said, "you see him, knock him down and sit on his head, or else bring him along to me at the house-boat."

Mr. Lauriston had been about to object that he feared he was not now able to knock people down with the facility of his

youth ; but Charles, who had been on guard all the morning without seeing anyone and who was now hungry and rather out of temper, departed without waiting for an answer. Moreover he did not intend to return for two hours or more, and Mr. Lauriston had a strong and military sense of duty. He had undertaken to mount guard until Charles returned, and that he would gladly do ; but as to knocking down or capturing the enemy, he was not sure that it was part of his duty. He preferred to think that it was one of those cases in which a volunteer, or ex-volunteer, may use his intelligence and advance or retire (taking advantage of every bit of cover) at his discretion. Besides, he was an ex-volunteer, not an ex-policeman, and he naturally took the military view of the situation so far as he could. It was not possible to do so with a whole heart for there was no disguising the fact that the enemy was at a disadvantage ; he did not even know that he was an enemy. How then should he be crouching in a ditch looking out for Mr. Lauriston ? There was a one-sidedness about it that was not at all satisfactory, and it was almost to be regretted that he had lent himself to the scheme. However, since it was so he would do his duty, but he would not be rash.

This determined, he lighted another cigar and settled himself more comfortably in the ditch. His post lay at some distance from the mill between the osier-bed and the hedge that separated it from the lane. Charles had chosen it in the morning because it commanded a view of both approaches to the mill-door, and had made a seat in the ditch with a board and some bricks, from which he was able to look through a hole at the bottom of the hedge, probably caused by some dog that was accustomed to pass that way. Mr. Lauriston had not much trouble therefore in keeping a sharp look-out, though were anyone to come past it would be necessary to withdraw the head which, oddly placed amid the foliage, might attract attention.

It was some time before anything happened, but when he was about half-way through his cigar he caught sight of a female figure coming past the mill. It was Agatha with her basket. Mr. Lauriston withdrew, hoping that she would not notice the hole in the hedge and feel an overpowering impulse to mend it. She would wonder what her uncle was doing there, he felt. However, Agatha passed by safely and went on up the hill. She had not been gone long when he heard another person coming

along the path through the osier-bed. The path was soft, but there was a rustling of the osiers which served instead of audible footsteps. This person got over the stile and also went up the path towards the village. Mr. Lauriston peeping out cautiously after he had passed recognised Majendie, and noticed that he was adjusting his eye-glasses.

A little later still a third person appeared on the path by the mill, a person with a parasol and two red cushions. "She isn't going to fish then, after all," said Mr. Lauriston to himself, looking in vain for the rod of which Cicely had spoken with affection at luncheon. Cicely walked slowly past the mill, turned the corner to the right, and disappeared behind the bushes that grew round the mill-pool. Her uncle smiled after her, and reflected that he would be able to use the absence of a fishing-rod as a conversational weapon if she tried to tease him that evening. But his meditations were interrupted by more rustling of osiers, which indicated that another person was approaching in haste. Very soon the person was in the road, and Mr. Lauriston saw him take a hurried look up and down, and then disappear into the mill.

Mr. Lauriston felt excited. The enemy was probably now before him. If a man attired in a blue suit, brown boots, and Panama hat were to come out of the mill there would be no question of it. He watched the door expectantly, and before very long he was rewarded by seeing just such a person emerging. The man again looked both up and down, and then vanished round the corner of the mill in the direction taken by Cicely.

Mr. Lauriston sat up on his board to think. It was too late to knock the man down now, which was perhaps as well, in view of his military conception of duty, to say nothing of the loss of his youthful facility. It was still, however, open to him to pursue the person and, if occasion offered, to capture him; he was of opinion that occasion would not offer, but he determined to advance, and making his way cautiously through the osiers he gained the road and thence crept from bush to bush in the approved military fashion, reconnoitring every yard of country before he traversed it, and carefully avoiding dry sticks or leaves that might crackle and declare his presence.

All this took a considerable time, for Mr. Lauriston believed in thoroughness, and he would not leave one bush until he had

satisfied himself that the enemy was not in the immediate vicinity of the next. At last, however, he came to a point where there were no more bushes and where, if he continued to advance, he must do so across the open. There was a clump of willows down by the river some distance to his right, but elsewhere the landscape was bare, and there was no sign of the enemy. Mr. Lauriston felt the ground behind his bush, found it dry enough, and sat down to consider his next move.

CHAPTER XXXII

"I THINK the curate went straight back to his aunt and uncle," said Cicely, shaking her head disapprovingly.

Talbot was still nefariously resplendent, and resolutely conscious of it. "The curate didn't go directly," he asserted; "he wasn't really annoyed, you know."

Cicely shook her head again. He seemed even more than usually determined, and had possessed himself of her favourite cushion and was putting it against her particular tree. Although she had arrived first, something, perhaps this very fact, had induced her to stroll a little way down the bank, to find Talbot waiting for her on her return. She reflected that she had walked quite far enough for the present, but he was not to be pardoned yet. "Girls aren't supposed to be vain," she observed generally, continuing her parable.

"That isn't it at all, you know," said Talbot, "and the curate knew that."

"But when he had said what she ought to do and she didn't do it, he wasn't at all pleased," Cicely continued judicially. "It wasn't at all proper of her, was it?"

"It was all to show what she thought was due to the curate, and besides you never told the—"

"The curate's aunt went again to look for the portmanteau," Cicely digressed suddenly. "I believe they're looking for it now," she ended with a little merry laugh and a mischievous glance at him. But though his lips smiled his eyes never changed; they were fixed steadily on hers. Cicely looked away with an effort. "The big girl should," she began.

"I knew I should," Talbot conceded, "but there's one thing I must know first."

"No," protested Cicely, "I've told you all I can, and I ought to be very angry with you," she concluded rather weakly, with a consciousness that she was not to-day mistress of the situation.

"I must know the end of the story," he said resolutely.

"Oh! not this afternoon." Cicely looked up, appealing.

"There are not many more afternoons," he replied slowly.

Cicely was silent. She turned half away and looked at the river, where a fish had just risen. The little circling ripple widened, but she did not call his attention to it. The end was coming.

"Did the——did the curate," began Talbot hesitatingly. Cicely's left hand hung by her side near him, and her face was almost wholly averted. The little soft fingers unclosed helplessly. Talbot took her hand caressingly. "You know I have always loved you," he said. Her hand trembled; she did not speak. "Say that you love me, Cicely. You must, you shall. Don't turn away from me, unless that is to be the end. I will love you all my life, if you will. Look at me, Cicely, and tell me your answer. You must."

Cicely was still silent, but she did turn a very little, just to look at him once, for she did not want to answer just yet. She wanted to think, she said to herself, and he wasn't giving her any time. One peep though——

It was a longer peep than she had intended. Talbot was very close to her, his features set and grave. But, as she raised her face, the soft mouth puckered in pretty perplexity, half yielding, half elusive. He smiled triumphantly. "You do love me a little," he said stooping lower, "and we are going to love each other always."

It was not at all what she had meant to happen, as she remembered later; but then he had kissed her before she had any time to say anything, and without even asking if he might,—which was perhaps just as well, as if he had asked she would of course not have allowed it, and he wouldn't have done it, and that would have been a pity. So at least she thought afterwards; but at that moment she only felt that somebody had taken her quite away from herself and that she was very happy.

"You've spoilt my hat, I'm sure you have," was Cicely's first remark after the interlude. She slipped away from him blushing, and re-settling herself put up both hands to minister to

the imaginary damages, reconnoitring Talbot from under the brim with softly mischievous eyes.

The correct angler descended to earth with a half-sigh. However he resumed triumphantly his previous theme. "You do love me a little then, don't you?"

Cicely smiled. "Well, perhaps," she conceded.

"I did from the very first," averred Talbot.

"From the very first?" she echoed. Talbot repeated his statement with conviction. "Are you quite, quite sure?" she pursued.

Talbot was positive, and expressed himself at some length. "Yes, when I first saw you sitting just where you are now. So I began at once."

"Oh, but you didn't see me at all," said she. "You thought of nothing but the fish. You didn't even look at me till you'd caught it."

"That was very foolish," agreed Talbot.

"You don't mean that, you know," said Cicely. "Fish are so very important."

"But I do," he insisted. "I might have known you quite a minute longer if it hadn't taken so long to catch. And I can never get that minute back now, can I?"

"If you hadn't caught it, we would never have known each other at all, poor fish!" sighed Cicely.

"There's still the minute, though." Talbot had not yet forgiven the introductory perch. "We shall always have that to make up. It will take many many years, won't it? And to think that there were all the years before it, and I never knew you till then!" He was aghast at the improvidence of time.

"But you caught fish and never thought about me," she said.

"I never thought there could be you, you see. If I had known, I shouldn't have thought about anything else. There's only one you," he added.

Cicely smiled approvingly. "I used to think about you though," she admitted. "Only you weren't at all like you."

"What was I like?" Talbot was amused.

"You didn't behave like the big girl and hide portmanteaux," said Cicely. "You used to rescue people."

"Not from mad cows," he suggested.

"You were a really noble man." Cicely abandoned fancy's ideal and returned to reality. "But I think you,—*you*, I mean—are just as nice, only you ought to give them back, oughtn't you?"

"Well, perhaps I ought," he confessed. "Shall I be nicer then than the one you used to think about?"

"You are the same, really," decided Cicely; "but I never thought you would be down here."

"I suppose I used to think about you too sometimes," confessed Talbot after a little meditation, "only nobody ever knew."

"When the fish didn't bite?" she enquired.

"No, you didn't fish," he said in a tone which indicated his opinion of those who did.

"Well, do I?" she defended herself.

"You do just exactly what you ought to do," he agreed, "and I shan't be able to do without you. You'll have to come with me always when we're married."

They considered this prospect in silence for a while and then Cicely suddenly realised the situation. "Oh, whatever have I done?" she exclaimed tragically.

"Nothing very dreadful," suggested Talbot not yet enlightened.

"But it *is* dreadful, it's perfectly horrid; what can you think of me?"

"That you are quite the most charming little person in the universe," he smiled at her. "Now, what is it?"

"You, you don't know me!" she said, still tragic.

"Well, I shall live to learn, and I want nothing better," said Talbot.

"But we've not been—oh, don't you understand?"

"You mean, I haven't the privilege of Mrs. Lauriston's acquaintance?" said Talbot still smiling.

"How *can* you laugh?" she said plaintively. "What *have* I done?"

"We've met, and we're going to be married," stated Talbot firmly. "That's not so very dreadful, is it?" he insinuated.

"But what will my aunt say?" asked Cicely with a blush.

"That I don't deserve to have you, I suppose. However, if you don't mind——"

"But I oughtn't ever to have been here at all. How can I tell her?" she appealed.

"It was all my fault, so suppose that I tell her? Is she so very dreadful? I did ask you once, you know," said he.

"Oh, you don't understand at all, and it was all my fault," Cicely sighed.

"Now you're not to say that again," he ordained. "But I see Mrs. Lauriston is a very dreadful person sometimes. However, it's our affair."

"She'll say I must never see you any more," prophesied Cicely with solemnity.

"That won't happen, whatever she says," remarked Talbot. "Well, then, suppose we make it a little worse?"

"It can't be any worse," mourned the repentant one.

"I mean, suppose we went away now and got married."

"How could you think of such a thing?" Cicely was alarmed.

"There's very little I wouldn't think of, and do too, if it was a case of losing you," said Talbot firmly. "We could tell her afterwards, of course."

"Oh, if you say such things I oughtn't ever——" began Cicely.

"We neither of us always do quite what we ought, fortunately," he said with a smile.

"That's not kind of you," Cicely objected reproachfully.

"Then we've only done what we ought to have done, dear, and that's quite settled."

"Aunt Charlotte will be so angry though," she said returning to the main point. "Oh, I ought to have told her at the very beginning."

"Then she wouldn't have let you fish perhaps, and where should we have been now?" he demanded. Truth compelled Cicely to say that she feared she would have been in Ealing. "I should have been in Ealing too, then," he declared, "but it would have been different. Don't say you would have had it different, Cicely, for if you do I must regret all the perfect hours of my life. Just you and I; I wouldn't exchange a moment that we have had or alter it. You don't really want it to have been different, do you?"

"No, I couldn't," she admitted; "but I ought, I know I ought."

"What a woman you are," cried Talbot delightedly.

"So ought you," persisted Cicely, smiling again.

"I expect I ought," he agreed cheerfully; "but I suffer from the moral obliquity of the mere man, you see."

"Yes, I ought to have known," she sighed anew; "so it's my fault."

"If so, I'm glad I took Haddon's clothes," stated Talbot. Cicely looked at him for enlightenment. "That was my fault anyhow, and I ought to have known, so we're a pair," he explained.

"Now you're being horrid too," protested Cicely. "It doesn't make it any better, and it wouldn't help with Aunt Charlotte a little bit."

"Then there's nothing for it but——" Talbot was returning to his original short way with relations.

"You know you mustn't say that again; it wouldn't be right." Cicely was decided. "Oh dear, it's a dreadful tangle. Why did you? Why did you? We could have begun again so nicely, and nobody would ever have known."

"There wasn't much time to begin again," he said. "But you're right; we must not have any concealments."

Cicely agreed regretfully. "Not even a little?" she suggested with a pathetic air.

"No, not even a little," he returned. "I'll go and see your people at once."

"Oh, not Aunt Charlotte," she cried. "You don't know what she'd say. Oh it's——it's—— you *mustn't*. She'll forbid me ever to see you. And you wouldn't like that, would you?" she enquired with a delicious mixture of coquetry and alarm.

Talbot's negative was enthusiastic and he would have possessed himself of her hand to point it, and perhaps more; but Cicely held up an admonitory finger. "There mustn't be anything to conceal," she smiled.

"Then I must go to your aunt," he announced. He felt that he could face any number of aunts, whole battalions of aunts, and his heroic aspect diverted her from her panic and lent her a little courage.

"You're not to, you'll have to take my orders, sir," she said with pretty imperiousness. "I'll tell her a little about you, and then, if you behave really properly, she'll let you come sometimes."

"No concealments," commented Talbot, who saw Cicely's idea. "Do you know, I think you,— I mean, that your aunt hasn't a proper sense of her responsibilities."

Cicely looked at him quickly. "I don't think the meaning very complimentary, is it?" she asked.

"And that," he continued, "is why I want to relieve her of them. You ought to have someone to look after you," he insinuated. "As it's been all my fault, I'm glad to say it's going to be myself."

"I can't tell her at once." Cicely disregarded his suggestions.

"But there's your uncle," suggested Talbot.

Curiously enough they had both overlooked Mr. Lauriston; and Cicely's "So there is," had almost a ring of surprise in it, as well as of relief.

"Then I'll find your uncle and tell him," Talbot decided. "I'll go and find him now."

"Now?" Cicely echoed.

"Yes, now," he replied, "this minute."

"But—" she protested feebly.

"You said you did a little, just a little," he returned, taking her hand.

CHAPTER XXXIII

MR. LAURISTON sat behind his bush and kept a vigilant eye upon the open country across which the enemy had evidently moved. He wondered vaguely where Cicely was, for she too had passed that way; but he reflected that she was probably settled comfortably somewhere by the river-bank, and to look for her would be to expose himself to the risk of discovery. Moreover Mr. Lauriston held decided views about the influence of women in military affairs, though he did not give expression to them in Ealing, and it seemed to him better not to let Cicely know that operations were being conducted in her vicinity. A woman's actions cannot be predicated, and he feared that though Cicely was Cicely, she might be sufficiently akin to the rest of her sex to desire to superintend his manœuvres, and to demand that he should execute an instant and heroic frontal attack for her amusement. Accordingly he dismissed the idea of finding her and lighted a cigar. As the open country extended for a considerable distance he thought the smoke would not betray

him, and it would certainly be a consolation in his position of solitary danger.

As to the smoke not betraying him he was wrong. Talbot, after taking an adequate farewell of Cicely, had left the perch-hole, intent on finding Mr. Lauriston immediately, though he was not sure of his whereabouts or even of his appearance. For the one point, however, he trusted to the luck that had attended him so marvellously that day, and for the other to intuition; it was impossible that an uncle of his beloved one should not have inherited enough of her perfection to be recognisable. Strong in these convictions Talbot started off to set the seal upon his happiness and to compel Mr. Lauriston's acquiescence in the engagement that had just been arranged. He was in his most giant-like mood, and felt confident that no avuncular protest or violence would make the slightest difference to the course he was running.

Just as he emerged from the clump of willows and was about to turn towards the mill, his eye was attracted by a thin blue column of smoke that appeared to be rising from a bush about fifty yards away. In spite of his pre-occupation he could not help wondering what it meant, and the thought flashed upon him that it might be a heath-fire just beginning; this thought expanded into ideas of burning prairies and smouldering forests, and culminated in alarm for the safety of Cicely among her willows. Talbot went very swiftly to put out whatever flame might be causing the smoke.

The grass was soft: Mr. Lauriston's vigilance was wholly expended on the open country; and Talbot reached the bush unseen and unheard, to discover that the smoke proceeded from nothing more serious than a cigar between the lips of an elderly gentleman in a grey flannel suit, who was seated on the grass and apparently meditating on the scenery. Talbot checked the foot with which he had been prepared to stamp out the flame,—it was obviously not quite the thing to stamp out an elderly gentleman or even his cigar—and paused. It did not for the moment occur to him that this was Cicely's uncle and he might have withdrawn, had it not been that Mr. Lauriston became suddenly conscious that he was under observation.

Mr. Lauriston looked round to find standing at his side, clad in neat blue suit, brown boots, and Panama hat, the man on

whose movements he had believed himself to be keeping an eye. The discovery was too sudden to admit of speech at first, and Mr. Lauriston kept silence while they looked at each other. His mind, however, was not idle and he ran over the instructions that he had received in the event of some such situation as this. He was to knock the miscreant down and sit on his head, or else to capture him and take him to the house-boat. Mr. Lauriston revised these instructions in the light of Talbot's appearance, and with regard to the before-mentioned loss of youthful facility, and came to the conclusion that without reinforcements it would be eminently unwise to attack; indeed, even if he were reinforced by Charles, it seemed improbable that the two of them could do either of the things recommended if the formidable person before him resisted in any way.

Mr. Lauriston put all thought of his instructions away from him: acting on them could only result in needless loss of life (his own life) and nothing would be gained; but he was too good a soldier to neglect his duty, even though he declined an immediate engagement. He would if possible keep in touch with the enemy until reinforcements,—Charles, Majendie, the Admiral, Martin, the miller and his two men—could be collected, and then battle might be given.

"Ahem," said Mr. Lauriston in pursuance of this determination.

Meanwhile Talbot had utilised the brief period of mutual inspection to wonder who the elderly gentleman was, and why he was sitting there. He was still without suspicion of his identity; he was seeking someone with Cicely's eyes and hair and similar pretty ways (an unreasonable amount to expect of an uncle by marriage, but lovers are not reasonable), and he did not see in Mr. Lauriston any of these things. He did see, however, that the elderly gentleman with the rather bald head, grey whiskers, and moustache, bent a somewhat severe eye upon him, a fact which he attributed to his having been disturbed. "I beg your pardon," said Talbot politely; "I'm afraid I've disturbed you. I didn't know you were here."

"Oh, not at all," returned Mr. Lauriston somewhat coldly, choosing his words with care.

"I saw the smoke of your cigar," Talbot explained, "and thought something was on fire."

"Nothing is on fire," Mr. Lauriston answered, feeling that the enemy was possessed of a good deal of assurance.

"Except your cigar," amended Talbot, hoping that this would provoke a smile. He felt happy himself, and he wanted this elderly gentleman to feel happy too, though he did not know who he was or why he was sitting behind the bush.

Mr. Lauriston did not smile. To smile would be to make terms with the enemy, he felt, and moreover he strongly disapproved of the laxity of morals that could allow the person before him to go about in another man's raiment and yet preserve a cheerful countenance. Such behaviour was positively indecent. The more he thought of it the more strongly he disapproved, and at last he determined to do what was clearly his duty. As a scout and an ex-volunteer he owed it to Charles, as a man and a householder he owed it to himself and the community, to raise a protest at least against open and flagrant dishonesty. "May I ask, sir," he said, disregarding Talbot's pleasantry, "where you got those clothes?"

Talbot's expression of half-humorous interest changed to blank astonishment. How in the world did this elderly gentleman, sitting behind a bush, come to have suspicions, apparently well founded, as to the authenticity of his costume? For a moment Talbot was completely taken aback. "These clothes?" he repeated mechanically.

"Yes, sir," continued Mr. Lauriston firmly, "and those boots, and that hat."

Suddenly Talbot realised who the elderly gentleman was; of course this was Cicely's uncle, though he hadn't her eyes or her hair, and certainly none of her pretty ways, and of course he derived his knowledge of the clothes from Charles. Astonishment gave place to amusement and Talbot laughed aloud, while Mr. Lauriston looked at him indignantly, but not without anxiety, for if the person was mad he would certainly be a very dangerous madman indeed, and the reinforcements he had thought of would probably be inadequate.

But Talbot checked his laughter, remembering that for Cicely's sake the uncle must be propitiated and not converted into an enemy. He also thought he saw a way of utilising a situation that looked awkward, of turning defeat into victory. "You must be Mr. Lauriston?" he said. "This is very fortunate," he continued, when the question had been answered by a slight nod of acquiescence. "In fact I was looking for you. Of course I'll tell you all about the clothes. May I sit down?"

Talbot accordingly sat down by Mr. Lauriston, who was surprised in his turn, but somewhat relieved by the prospect of a pacific solution of the question at issue. "My name is Talbot," continued the speaker filling his pipe; "I daresay my friend Haddon has mentioned me to you, though I expect he hasn't given me much of a character in the social line."

Mr. Lauriston admitted that he had heard of Talbot. "I gathered that you were an angler, and anglers are always solitary," he said politely, feeling that as he was to hear the explanation of the clothes there was now no need for other than a friendly demeanour.

Talbot nodded. "I *was* solitary," he said, "but that's rather changed. However, I'll come to that presently. Well, Haddon isn't like that, is he?" Mr. Lauriston conceded this. "He's a regular society-man, fond of drawing-rooms and at-homes, and flirtations and that sort of thing; I don't mean to run him down, because he's a first-rate fellow, but we all have our weaknesses and that's his. And that is the reason why I'm wearing his clothes." Mr. Lauriston looked surprised; the reason did not seem explanatory enough. "You see," said Talbot, noticing the look, "we came down here with a definite object. Most of us,—all except Haddon, in fact, who's rich by nature—work pretty hard, and when one takes a holiday one wants a real holiday, a return to the primitive man, so to speak." Mr. Lauriston nodded thoughtfully. "Well, I ask you," Talbot continued, "can one return to the primitive man in this sort of costume?" This again was admitted by a nod, but Mr. Lauriston looked as if he would like to ask a question. Talbot, however, went on before he could do so. "Therefore it seemed good to us to remove temptation out of Haddon's way. When one's in the condition of primitive man one's not good company for ladies. You see, women arrogate to themselves all the right of being primitive and they won't tolerate it in men. Therefore we didn't want Haddon in all the panoply of civilisation to display us as freaks to any ladies whom he might know in the neighbourhood. That was his first thought on arrival, and we had to act speedily to prevent it."

"I didn't know about that," Mr. Lauriston admitted after a little meditation, in which he recurred involuntarily to some of his own sensations on that evening of disillusionment; "it

makes a difference of course. I understand why you took them away ; but I confess it's not clear to me why you're wearing them now."

"I'll be quite frank with you," said Talbot earnestly. "It's rather amusing in a way too. If Charles (that's what we call him, by the way) has talked much about me to you, you will have gathered that I was not addicted to feminine society, a triple bronze sort of man where women were concerned.

Mr. Lauriston smiled, a little curiously. "He gave me the impression that you were—not impressionable," he replied.

"Thank you for the nice way of putting it," said Talbot. "It's quite true ; I'm not in a general way. But oddly enough I hadn't been down here two days when I discovered that I was not feeling so primitive as I had been ; in fact I was recalled rather suddenly to our time and its necessities."

Mr. Lauriston was smiling again, but he made a deprecatory movement as though to indicate that he did not wish to force any confidences. He was somewhat at a loss to know why they should be given to him. Talbot had not the air of one who tells all his private affairs to a stranger. "But you have a right to know," said Talbot, "as you have taken such an interest in the Gladstone bag, and besides I feel that I should like the benefit of your opinion. I can't somehow regard you as quite a stranger, if I may take the liberty of saying so." His tone was candour itself, and Mr. Lauriston could not help feeling a little flattered. Besides few men can turn a deaf ear to another man's love-story,—for the telling of it cannot but place their own wisdom in a light of creditable superiority. Therefore Mr. Lauriston put aside his wonder and prepared to listen benignly.

Talbot saw that he had made a good impression and went on with his artless explanation. "As you have guessed of course, my aspirations after a universally primitive existence were modified by meeting a lady, and as one can't pay one's addresses without a collar,—at least one doesn't feel sure of oneself without one—I was compelled to borrow the things in which you see me."

Mr. Lauriston's smile was sympathetic. He wondered how much his course of life would have been altered if he had wooed his own wife without a collar. He shrewdly suspected that such a proceeding would have incurred her just resentment,

and his own immediate dismissal. "I believe you were right," he admitted.

"It was a little unfortunate, perhaps," Talbot continued, "that Haddon should also have made up his mind to get to know the lady in question, because there weren't enough clothes for us both and the theory of the collar is one of his cherished beliefs. So he has put it off until he should find his clothes, while I——" he hesitated invitingly.

"Have made the best use of your time?" Mr. Lauriston suggested.

"Well, I believe I have," Talbot admitted modestly. "Not, I think, that Haddon would have made any difference; I could not have allowed that, of course." There was a decision about this statement and the air with which it was made that impressed Mr. Lauriston. "This sort of thing makes a man think," Talbot continued, "and I've been wondering whether I should be considered a good enough match." Thereupon he expansively opened his heart with regard to his financial position and prospects, his fairly satisfactory past, and his remarkably exemplary future.

Mr. Lauriston listened with the experienced air of one whose illusions have long since culminated in marriage, but kindly withal, and finally said: "I don't see that you could be objected to by her family, if the lady will have you."

Talbot was gratified. "I'm very glad to hear that," he said. "I am proud to say that the lady will have me, but as a matter of fact I have not yet had an opportunity of laying the matter before her family. You make me more hopeful."

"How long have you known her?" Mr. Lauriston asked involuntarily; he gathered from the narrative that it could not have been very long.

"A life-time," said Talbot promptly. "Other people would call it ten days."

"Do you always do things as quickly as that?" said the other looking at him in a kind of awed admiration.

"I generally know my own mind," Talbot answered, "and that assured there is seldom any case for delay."

"Very remarkable," ejaculated Mr. Lauriston. His own courtship had been an affair of protracted decorum. "Very remarkable indeed. I don't know whether I ought to approve of your proceedings though. In my young days—" he

paused ; Talbot was not the kind of man to whom one speaks of one's youth and the moral teaching that may be drawn from it.

Talbot, however, was submissive. "I know," he said, "that I must seem a sudden kind of person to you, but when a man finds his happiness within reach he would be foolish not to seize it. You don't think I should make a bad husband on that account ?" he added in a tone of deferential anxiety.

Mr. Lauriston laughed. "No," he said, "not if you display the same decision on your wife's behalf."

"I shall certainly do that," Talbot returned. "I'm very grateful to you for your opinion ; it's done me good."

The other laughed his laugh out. "I'm sure I don't know why I've given it," he said. "I have an idea that you extracted it, but it cannot be of any importance to you."

"To tell you the truth," Talbot said slowly, "I attach considerable importance to it, because,—well you're a married man for one thing, and I should value your friendship for another and—" he hesitated, whereupon Mr. Lauriston nodded encouragingly ; he began to like this strange new acquaintance. "Well, in fact, the lady in question is your niece."

"My niece ?" echoed Mr. Lauriston.

"Yes, Cicely," replied Talbot, watching his face, which presented an interesting study in lively and varied emotion.

For a long time silence reigned while Mr. Lauriston wrestled with incredulity, amazement, indignation, and all the deep feelings that are proper to an uncle. As he gradually unravelled the tangled skein of thought many things became more clear than they had been. Finally pent up emotion found vent in an irrelevancy. "And the fish ?" he asked.

"I caught them," said Talbot.

"And I ate them," ejaculated Mr Lauriston.

"I also taught her the Latin names," Talbot added.

"She only remembered bits of them," the other murmured. Then their eyes met and despite himself he began to laugh. Cicely's duplicity, reviewed with the aid of this knowledge, was irresistible. "I felt it all along—such big fish—all by herself—Cicely—Latin," were the disjointed utterances that marked his train of thought, brought out with some difficulty in the midst of his laughter.

"Then I have your consent ?" Talbot said presently.

Mr Lauriston considered the set of his mouth and chin. "Would it make any difference to you?" he said with the irony of resignation. "But you've got to get my wife's, too," he added. "Cicely is her niece really, mine only by marriage."

"I have your good will?" Talbot insisted.

Mr Lauriston was moved, "You know what you are getting in her?" he asked. "The child has been a daughter to me."

"I do indeed," said Talbot very gravely. "She shall have no cause for regret." He put out his hand; after looking at him for a moment or two Mr Lauriston took it, and the compact was ratified.

Meanwhile Cicely had been sitting under her willow meditating and wondering whether Talbot had found her uncle, and what had happened, and if it was all right. She also considered what she should say to Aunt Charlotte,—a problem that lasted her for a considerable time. At length, however, as Talbot did not return she decided that she might find a more satisfactory form of words to be used with her aunt if she went for a walk. "Aunt Charlotte," she would begin, "how did you first meet Uncle Henry, and did you love him very much and—?" She had just renounced this opening as impracticable for the tenth time, when she came upon Uncle Henry just as he was grasping Talbot's hand. This sight put the other matter for the moment out of her head and she stopped in doubt whether to run away and hide herself, for, now that the inevitable moment was at hand, she no longer had any courage at all.

Talbot, however, had seen her at once. He jumped up and took her hand. "It's all right," he whispered as Mr. Lauriston rose.

That gentleman surveyed Cicely's blushing face, and shook his head smiling. "What was that Latin name?" he asked.

Cicely laughed consciously. "I couldn't remember it all," she admitted; "but it doesn't matter now," she glanced shyly at Talbot. "Are you going to forgive us, Uncle Henry?" she added in coaxing tones. "We've been very wicked, but we will always be very good in future."

"I want you to be happy, Cicely," her uncle replied tenderly, and if——"

"And if one is good one is happy," she declared triumphantly, "and I shall be very good indeed. But, Uncle Henry, you

must help us with Aunt Charlotte. You know you went to the house-boat yourself, and you *must*." Cicely said this with infinite decision.

"I hope you'll come there again," Talbot put in, "all of you. You must all come to tea to-morrow."

"I'd better talk to my wife first," Mr. Lauriston answered. "There are difficulties——"

"But those can be got over," Talbot interrupted. "How would it be if I——?"

"Better not—yet," said Mr. Lauriston in some alarm.

"To-morrow, then, when you come to tea," Talbot urged.

"If we come to tea," Mr. Lauriston amended with misgivings.

"But you will."

"We'll come if we can," he said, "that is, if all goes well. My wife, you see——," but Mr. Lauriston felt that he could not explain fully; later, no doubt, Talbot would find out for himself, and appreciate the difficulties.

By this time they had reached the mill, and the uncle and niece prepared to go home, and face the storm. "To-morrow, then," said Talbot, "at four o'clock."

"If it can be managed," Mr. Lauriston assented. "What about the other primitive men though?" he added slyly.

Talbot laughed. "Oh, they're open to conviction, most of them," he asserted, but he did not feel called upon to say why. After all his friends must play their own hands, and he did not know what cards they held. The three parted. Talbot shook Mr. Lauriston's hand warmly, and looked as if he were going to kiss Cicely, but she evaded him with a blush and a mischievous glance, though she permitted her hand to remain in his a fraction of time longer than was absolutely essential.

(To be continued.)

SOME THOUGHTS ON OUR PRESENT DISCONTENTS

EXCEPT among those who live altogether without thought, and some of those who profess the philosophy of indifference, there exists a deep feeling of unrest, an earnest desire of change, a discontent which is in some instances "divine," and which certainly is widely spread. We seem to have moved far away from the time when Tennyson, for example, could accept the early teaching of science, and find in it much of hope and consolation.

All, all is well, tho' faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear ;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice. . . .

So we may read in *IN MEMORIAM* ; but we seem, in the interval between his time and the present, to have approached nearer to the spirit of that other and later poem of his, *DESPAIR*, a vision of men unconsolated, inconsolable, who fear life more than death, and who, having lost hope and fear, preserve one desire only, to escape.

The change can scarcely surprise us, and, if we look for causes, we shall find many. We cannot yet have forgotten those thirteen millions, always on the brink of destitution, of whom we were told not very long ago. Their voices must all be raised against the present world, out of the depths of a misery which we can only guess at from *TALES OF MEAN STREETS*, or *THE PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS*.

Then there is another cause of social discontent. The people of Mr. London's underworld are too benumbed in their

wretchedness to make sharply realised comparisons between their condition and that of their more fortunate brothers. Their tragedy is most of all evident to an on-looker ; but there is another whose pathos is obscured by its wearing the mask of the ludicrous. We take the young and educate them, as we call it. We teach them many things for which they have no conceivable use. Without acquiring any counter-balancing steadiness of judgment, they learn to perceive the narrowness and, it may be, the squalor of their homes. They dream of freeing themselves from the bond-service, as they regard it, of labouring with their hands. They aspire,—do not smile, it is no smiling matter—to become clerks, or to succeed their pedagogue at his desk. Those who fail to realise their dream become but indifferent workmen, for they have an uneasy feeling that they were made for higher things ; and they scorn the work by which they live as a base necessity. Those who succeed find just above them another grade whose life seems pleasanter, easier, more “gentlemanlike” than their own ; why should they be checked in their ascent ? Thus they too nourish their grudge against a society which sharpens their wits, but sooner or later obstructs their ambition. Such people realise and exaggerate the differences in fortune between themselves and others ; and they suffer sharp torments, until the daily task has ground down their hopes and left them to live their daily life mechanically.

But there are other, finer types of discontent, that, for instance, of the man gifted with delicate perceptions and quick feelings, of him who is a poet at heart. He sees round him so many whose hearts are set on sordid interests ; he lives in a world which sets so high a value on the hard genius of money-getting ; he finds so few whose love of the simple beauties of natural things is anything more than affected sentimentality, that it is a wonder indeed if he does not feel isolated, uncomprehended and uncomprehending. He is driven to wear an armour of hardness or of irony, while emotions which should have been a source of joy are converted into a means of pain.

Or again, there is the man of culture, how can he regard the modern life ? He sees that knowledge, especially in physical and historical matters, has increased prodigiously ; but then he sees also that modern life is too hurried to transmute its new knowledge into fresh wisdom. He may meet many men of great attainments, and some of encyclopædic learning, but how

few who have found time to nourish the fine flower of culture with meditation. He hears our times praised as the era of liberty and of free opinion, when each can determine for himself what he will regard as truth ; but he sees that nine-tenths of us take our opinions ready-made, and dream no more of discussing their value than a good Catholic would dream of disputing the decrees of Mother Church. The Middle Ages had one authority ; we have none, and the result seems much the same. We, too, can give no account of ourselves. These free opinions of ours are only borrowed for the occasion. We do not understand them, we do not like the trouble of thinking, we take what is offered us as the latest theory. But no latest theory lasts long ; it is quickly supplanted, and hence our inconstancy of thought. What is lightly taken up is dropped as lightly. Our theory becomes unfashionable, and we straightway are converts to the latest intellectual mode ; or it conflicts with our desires, and we straightway throw it away. In politics, in ethics, in religion, we fight, most of us, under banners whose signs we have never learnt to read ; and our allegiance is as easily given, and as easily denied, as an Italian *condottiere's*. Our boasted intellectual liberty has come to mean that we may change our beliefs for as little reason as we please. We are becoming creatures of chance without any scheme of life.

Older, soberer ages offered their plan of life and thought to the child, and taught him lessons of conduct and self-restraint. Thus he learnt to perceive design in life, and to introduce design into his own career. A beautiful life, a life whose age fulfils the dreams of its youth, as it has been well defined, a life fairly proportioned, whole and shapely, was thus presented to him as an object for which he might strive. But our schools are devoting themselves more and more to the art of money-making. Every day sees them more technical and less liberal. Even our universities themselves are infected, and we hear of proposals such as that of building a School of Agriculture at Cambridge. It is one of the curious features of our modern life, that while our primary schools have been expanding their syllabus, and including odds and ends of the beginnings of a liberal education, our higher schools have been developing with all their might what is so aptly called the Modern Side.

In short, life has been cut from its moorings, and our inner life is too exact a counterpart of our outer. There we are

endeavouring to revert to the nomadic stage of existence. We make our homes nowhere. We are passing guests, ever looking to our next removal. Permanent ties irk us, and we are fearful of engaging ourselves to the morrow. Families no longer are settled in some one place to which their wandering members may look to return. We mistake unending restlessness for activity, just as we mistake inconstancy for width of mind. Just as we seek comfort in one belief to-day and in another to-morrow, so too we shift from town to town, and from town to country, hoping to find less care-stricken minds beneath new skies ; then, disappointed, we reverse the process, but are never still and never content. This is the fruit of our modern life, with its feverish competition, and endless journeyings upon the wings of the wind.

And not only the intensely poor and those who are taught ambition without being taught the just relations of things, not only poets among the insensible, and men of culture among those who think that wisdom is a mere question of accumulating knowledge, just as one may accumulate wealth, but a type, not necessarily included under any of these, also has its deep reason for discontent. This is that class of men who have sought in "scientific method" a system of ethics, a social philosophy, a metaphysic, as well as a complete and powerful instrument for investigating material nature. In the early days of the scientific movement it seemed that human progress was indubitable. The world's inheritance of remaining evils, moral as well as physical, was going to be dissipated by great and demonstrated truths. Life was going to become altogether a simpler matter. Life is the subject of severe, unbending laws,—that was the postulate. "Let us discover these laws," men said ; "and then we can live without ever coming into contact with the inevitable ; then we can reckon out our course with certainty ; then we can have done with all the distracting doubts which beset us ; then we can be as gods, knowing good and evil." Thus thinking they set out with high hope, to codify the laws of the physical and spiritual worlds. In the one, indeed, they met with great, wonderful, and deserved success. Province after province they circumscribed and brought within our possession. As we look back, it is impossible not to feel deep admiration for their untiring, disinterested perseverance, and sincere gratitude for the deliverance from many evils which they have accomplished, not

for themselves, but for the whole of the civilised world. But even in physical matters their success has not been, and, we may venture to believe, never will be, absolute and perfect. Unhappily modern medicine and surgery have lagged a little behind the increase of disease; and modern sanitation has been able only in part to compensate the dwellers in our overgrown cities for the deprivation of sunshine and fresh air. In the meantime efforts have been made to set up sciences of history, of morals, of religion. But in the mental world scientific method has not nearly succeeded in performing all that it promised. It has built up large theories, but they are insubstantial; it has hazarded brilliant guesses, but they are not convincing. In metaphysics it has been even more unfortunate than elsewhere. While its more prudent supporters have held their peace, as knowing that the final solution of the metaphysical problem is beyond the reach of man's intellect, its rasher adherents have bound themselves to the narrow theory of materialism, which has been tried and found wanting by the subtler philosophers of every age. In philosophy, therefore, it offers us nothing except an old and long discredited system; in history it has collected new facts, but for any great laws underlying history we still look in vain; in morals it has done nothing; in religion it has disturbed men's beliefs, but given them no certainty in exchange. Thus in the moral world it has led to chaos, to a confused, useless, wavering scepticism. Those who have pinned their faith on science, and hoped to interpret by its teaching the inner secrets of the universe, receive this for their reward.

Modern scepticism is seemingly so deep and permanent that those affected by it lose the power of belief. Even if such a one felt inclined to believe something a little out of the ordinary course of things, he would look round and seek for those who differed from him, and their doubt would suffice to destroy his faith. Even if there were one abstract truth, not mathematical, which the whole of Western Europe professed to believe, there certainly would not be lacking men to point out instances of whole generations believing a gross error. It seems as if no argument about things for which men care could be valid enough finally to establish truth. Has it not been written, "For nothing worthy proving can be proven"? But men have lost faith even in the existence of truth as a permanent thing. *Magna est veritas et praevalabit*: Huxley could quote these

words happier far in his belief than our generation in its lack of belief ; but it, the generation which he taught, tells itself sadly that the prevalence of a belief is no voucher of its truth, and that the universal right reason to which he and older philosophers appealed, is nothing but a dream. Hence springs a discontent scarcely divine, but very weary and profound, far more desperate than purposeful,—the uneasy, all-embracing discontent of those who have fed themselves on illusion, and who cry that there is nothing but illusion. It is the poignant message written for all to read in *THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT*, a message not true of all of us, but of too many of the nobler ones among those who try to think and find a sure footing for themselves amid the confusion of the modern world.

The evils from which we suffer, then, are something more than material. True, we suffer from material evils, even amid this age of material progress. Our mechanical industrialism has called into being an over-great population, and collected it in large, unlovely cities ; and civilisation, which is born in the small town, in the kindly intercourse of those who know one another, and in the wholesome control each exercises over his fellow citizens, receives no further impulse when we live in a crowd of strangers to whose love and blame we are indifferent. In our great cities, too, we are ever in the midst of terrible and sordid things, which every now and then betray themselves, emerging from their subterranean existence for a moment like the foul creatures which our prophet of the future has described in one of his romances. But the sources of our discontent are far more moral than material ; and it is only those who can live without conscious moral hopes and aspirations who can breathe freely and easily in the modern atmosphere. For the rest, they must do the best they can with the thick medium which surrounds them, since they can reach no other. And for their comfort they may choose a philosophy of life, according as their character inspires them,—the philosophy of indifference, or of regret, or of hope.

The first is the philosophy natural to these days, and born of them. It serves as a sedative only by way of counter-irritation. After labouring for long in doubt, some have grown weary of their labours, and have said to themselves : "What is the use ? We have convinced ourselves that there is no truth ; we have tried

every opinion, and declare them all to be false. Then let those dispute who will ; for the future all opinions shall be the same to us, good only to be laughed at."

Most of us imagine the pessimist to be one who lives with a gloomy brow, and who chooses to wander in romantic scenes where he shall see nothing to remind him of his race and its futilities. But this popular picture represents not the true pessimist, but one who is masquerading in that character. The philosopher of indifference is far more profoundly pessimistic. He does not fly into wild solitudes, because so long as the human animal is to live, it may as well secure for itself the material comforts of civilisation. He does not mourn over himself and his fellow-men because neither he nor they are worth regret. He laughs, because man, his aspirations and his dreams are so wholly vain, their mere existence is such a mockery, that belief in them or compassion for them seems most ridiculous of all. From this point of view what can be more unwise than human labour, what more foolish than disputes over theories, or than efforts to increase that sum of vanities which we call human knowledge ? Who is more imbecile than the judge who condemns a martyr, unless it be the martyr who allows himself to be condemned ?

This philosophy of indifference is, we have said, only sedative on the principle of counter-irritation. It is the resource of the weak. It is a passing phase with many of us in our periods of weakness. Fortunately, with the return of self-possession, those who have assumed abandon it ; for it is not the only philosophy which may help us through the modern world. Beside it, and far preferable to it, is the philosophy of regret. This is the philosophy implicit in much of our modern verse,—indeed, the looking-back to a Golden Age, which is common to all poetries, shows evident traces of it. But our modern poetry, far more than any which preceded it, consists in the evocation of a past of beauty for the comfort of the present, that we may forget the present in thinking on the past. Is not this the poetry of Keats, of Shelley, and of so many others who could be cited ?

It is not in itself a perfectly wise philosophy. To live in the past, to dream of modes of life and forms of thought which have irrevocably vanished, to muse over decaying ruins and to sicken with desire for a departed serenity and grace,—this indeed

is no worthy manner of life. But at least it is superior to mere indifference. It has ideals, though it can find no mortal type of them in the existing world. It has belief in the good, the beautiful, and the true; and unless we believe in them, these can find no place in our hearts. And more than this,—to understand and judge the present, we must deeply read the past. Those who know nothing of what men have been, have no standard by which to measure men as they are. For even though the past has always to reckon with the judgment of the future, yet the perished generations also have their revenge, looking on and compelling posterity to judge itself.

We ought not, then, to reproach those who would revive in our minds the memories of what men have been. Such reminders can only be painful to us when we need to be reminded, when in some way we have become inferior to our predecessors. And thus the philosophy of regret, which looks back to the past and inspires us to meditate on more beautiful lives and more rounded culture than our own, justifies itself, for it shows us how our lives are imperfect and where our culture is incomplete. It yields a standard of judgment and a point of aspiration.

Yet the regret of past things amid our troubled present is really no more than the beginning of a true and precious philosophy. Merely to look back implies that one sees neither present nor past with perfect justness. You are apt to overlook the virtues, or at least the potential virtues, of present times, as well as to ignore the vices and faults of the past in which you have found your ideal. A clearer vision than this is needed, for no period was ever so deeply sunk but that man might cherish hopes of it, and might even attempt its reformation with advantage to himself and it. To such wistful regret and backward-looking, then, which show us where our world is falling away and retrogressive, we must add what we may learn from the philosophy of hope, which seeks out the means whereby it may become progressive, above all in those points in which it is in error. Is not this what every prophet and reformer has always set himself to do? Is not this the only manner in which he may set about doing any good to his generation?

To such questions the despairing and materialist philosopher answers: "No doubt it is the only way; but it is a way foredoomed to failure. A man is impotent against the spirit of the age. It is what Savonarola tried to do at Florence, and

got burnt for his pains. Carlyle and Ruskin and Arnold and the Pre-Raphaelites, and some of our socialists, each in his different way, have been trying to do it ever since the beginning of the period, but what success have they met with? They might just as well never have tried at all."

But this answer scarcely presents the facts fairly. It is clearly at the very time that the spirit of the age is against him, that there is need of the reformer. It is not a matter of indifference whether the reformer tries or not, however small may be his tribute of success. His own science should have taught the indifferentist that there is no action void of its result. We know too well that Carlyle and Ruskin and the rest have not succeeded in altering the complexion of the age. But we know too how Carlyle looked back to whatever time and place could show him a trace of the heroic; how Ruskin sought the spirit of truth and reverence; how Arnold remembered the ages when man was statelier and more complete on all his sides; how William Morris regretted those times when each took a deeper, truer interest in the rest, and felt a greater responsibility for their welfare. Although none of their ideals has been established in the hearts of this generation, yet we have been swayed towards them. We have the memory of their example; our ideas are the richer by their thought. As a generation we are shallow and unstable in all our ways; but without them the minority had been yet smaller.

As a generation we are so inclined to cheat ourselves with words that we are in danger of losing the sense of realities. We speak of the spirit of the age as if it were some definite and concrete force independent of ourselves. We are like those Frenchmen who in 1870 looked for Paris to be guarded by the shadow of the name of a Republic. In the same spirit of unreality, we say, "We have a spirit of the age, and it is no use our fighting it." And this metaphysical abstraction keeps us as quiet as a nursery bogle keeps the children. After all, the spirit of the age stands for nothing but the wishes and inclinations of the majority; and the disease of our majority is that of not knowing their own mind. This surely should not make a too awe-inspiring enemy.

Other reasons besides the invertebrate character of our majority seem to justify our practice of the philosophy of hope. We do not mean that the causes of our discontents are going suddenly to disappear, but that we have grounds for belief that they are not

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permanent factors. The mental chaos, which has been produced by the excursion of science into metaphysics, raising men's hopes of a solution and then dashing them, will certainly pass away, nay, it is already passing away. Then, too, many causes are promising to reduce the feverish competition of contemporary life. The growing power of the worker will certainly retard that wild haste which has had such baneful effects in the United States; indeed it is already made a complaint against him that he is doing so. The increase of population is returning to a more normal ratio, and this will be followed by a more permanent and rational distribution of it. But these things mean only the removal of external and disturbing factors. It will be for ourselves and our guides to remedy our inner defects, to recover a more sane and balanced culture, to learn to accept the facts of life with neither revolt nor despair, and to throw away our idle scepticism which says there is no good because a tiny portion of the human race seems to itself for a little while to have lost its way.

THE CHARM OF THE LOWER THAMES

It was my privilege, some few years ago, to own a friend whose talents were most clearly wasted amid the ledgers of a City office. The steam and oil of an engine-room, tempered by the river breezes, spelled happiness, and the dull routine of business keen misery to that unfettered soul. Hence it followed that in his hours of relaxation a steam-launch was necessary to his content; and, since neither his funds nor his studied recklessness of apparel were suited to the Upper Thames, he turned his attention to the wilder river below bridges. It was the habit of my brother and myself to share his follies, and thus, when a chance-read advertisement lured him to Rotten Row in the West India Docks, we formed his escort. There, where the derelicts of the river lie in an ease that is not dignified and plead for purchase, we found the *LYDIA*, who straightway won our hearts, and from that hour the Lower Thames had claimed us for its own.

In no sense of the word was the *LYDIA* an up-river craft; that fact, at least, was made apparent by the merest glance. I would that I had space for an adequate catalogue of her virtues and defects,—especially her defects. She had grown old in Government service, but her narrow, forty-foot hull was of good oak and still fairly sound; and there perhaps her soundness ended. She carried a high unsightly cabin aft, not unremotely resembling the roof of an antiquated bathing-machine, and forward was a flush forepeak, always abrim with lumber. In the former three very weary men might with difficulty contrive to sleep. Between these two was the tiny iron-roofed engine-room, a very inferno in warm weather when the fires were full. There, in its majesty, stood the aged single engine, always bad to cope with, and the boiler, not seldom worse. I am not certain that she would not have been dear at any price, but at

the time she seemed absurdly cheap. We bought her hurriedly, lest luckier folk should snap her up beneath our very eyes, and placed her in the hands of a leisurely expert, with most extravagant ideas as to the value of his time and skill, until at last she was repaired and fit in some degree for use.

And then in the Lower Thames we found a playground that wound itself about our hearts, we three who had been together at a certain public school, and who now earned our bread in the same dingy office. The wooded reaches of Cliveden and the like were not for us, nor did we mourn them. I do not seek for a moment to disparage those placid, gracious waters, dappled with light and shade, in which the splendours of the Quarry Woods are mirrored, on whose bosom may be seen the fairest faces and the daintiest dresses in the world ; but as well might you compare a dancing girl with a grim, time-scarred mother of nations, as the pleasant upper reaches with the swift, grey, sinuous river that we loved. Perhaps it appealed to us from its contrast with the roaring, squalid city, perhaps because its waters and its breezes are salt with the restless sea.

Mine was ever the lesser part to sit above and steer, while B. and R. took spell and spell about with the sluggish fires and stubborn engine. But R. would be the first to admit that B. was the master spirit in that narrow place of torment, what time the sun was blazing down upon the iron roof, what time the steam was dropping and the water low, what time the engine clamoured for eternal rest from jangling toil. Then it was that the greatness hidden in B. was apparent to the eye, and we who had tested him awaited the issue of the struggle with sure hope. I can see him clearly now, clad ever in wrinkled blue dungarees, his canvas shoes oozing black, oily moisture as he trod, and the picture is very pleasing to my eyes. Few in the City would have recognised him, with torn black hands that ever grasped an oil-can or a spanner, with face that curiously attracted oil and coal-dust, with eyes that gazed undaunted upon the job in hand through steam-dimmed glasses. Then, when another victory was added to his roll, when once again the engine was grinding steadily under the care of R., he would retire aft to the little bench, while from his dungarees would come the old black clay that never broke, that was ever with us as an oriflamme, and he would beam upon the world through a fragrant cloud of birdseye.

We rented moorings above Westminster Bridge beneath the windows of St. Thomas's Hospital, and every Saturday throughout that summer found us upon the river. They are unforgettable, those lazy Saturday evenings through which we lounged upon the deck, in the peace of tobacco, watching the long line of lights that glimmered from the Embankment, looking upon a misty night as though smeared upon the oily, sullen water. The river seems almost at its best in those evening hours, slipping grey and ghost-like beneath the echoing bridges, beside the great groined Houses of Parliament that loom huge and splendid through the soft, summer dusk. But then, to those who love it well, the great river seems always at its best.

It is very still upon the water as the twilight deepens ; so still that the swish of the passing river is as the voice of sombre music. Sometimes you may faintly hear a rustle or a murmur from those seats upon the Embankment where London's outcasts seek their broken rest ; sometimes the harsh voice of a policeman comes to your ears as he disturbs some homeless wretch's sleep. But for the most part those ragged, shrunken figures are as still and silent as though Death had already called them to his peace. I have seen strange folk upon those seats at times, as we returned from a theatre to our boat, and once I saw a little group that I have never forgotten. It was midnight, and a middle-aged woman, well and quietly dressed, was seated upon one of the stone benches with two small boys in sailor suits beside her. The children were asleep with their heads upon her lap, but the woman was looking out across the swift, dark river. I have often wondered what was the story of those three.

Sometimes there comes the shrill echo of a woman's laughter from Westminster Bridge, that looms a dim shadowy line before our bows ; sometimes with noiseless oars a police-boat creeps by upon its dark patrol. But mostly the world is very silent, save for the river's low undying song, as we lie chatting softly or surrender ourselves utterly to the magic of the night and to the glamour of those dancing fairy lights. It comes with almost a shock when Big Ben rouses himself to thunder brazenly the unheeded passage of the hours.

But if the charm of those dreamy, shadowy evenings made sleep appear a needless sacrilege, there was fascination also about those early mornings when we crawled from the cabin to watch the sunlight dancing down the misty river. It is Sunday, and

the peace of the Sabbath seems to brood above the city that for a while has ceased its tireless clamour. Many bells are clanging dreamily through the drowsy air, and the sleepers upon the Embankment are rousing themselves stiffly from their chilly couches to welcome the sunshine with reddened, blinking eyes. The Houses of Parliament peer through the pearly London haze that would lend beauty and dignity to far less stately piles than these, which scarcely stand in need of added grace. But there is always much to be done aboard a steam-launch handled entirely by three not over skilful amateurs; breakfast must be prepared, and steam coaxed swiftly in the stubborn boiler if we would profit by the morning tide.

The sun has sucked the mist from the river when at last we cast off from our buoy and begin our way down stream. The *LYDIA* on slack water is capable of little more than four miles an hour, but, with a lusty six-mile tide beneath her, her steady jog is not to be despised. We glide past many barges, beneath several grimy bridges, and emerge at length upon the crowded Pool. Before us the Tower Bridge looms through the faint blue haze like the gates of a giant's castle; behind us are the dull, serviceable arches of London Bridge. Away to the left the sun's rays catch the gilding on the Monument, and beneath them the dome and cross of St. Paul's seem worthy of London's greatness. On either hand tower up long rows of wharves and warehouses. At such short range, without the glamour of the kindly haze, they are clear cut and hideous to the careless eye; even the river seems to flow darkly and squalidly beneath their walls. And yet it spells wealth and strength and fame, the ugly, dirty drabness of it all. It is because of these grim warehouses that those long lines of tangled shipping have found their way to London's Pool from the ends of all the world.

Now we are level with the Tower and, as ever, its trim stone walls and keep appear in striking contrast to the memories it evokes and the ghosts that must surely haunt its gloomy cells,—the ghosts of the men and women who wore out their hearts or suffered cruel tortures and red deaths behind those walls. They have passed to dust long since; their tears have dried upon the stones and left no stain; their cries have ceased to echo down the narrow ways; and the great cage that hid their agonies has something of the trim smugness of a child's toy castle. Perhaps that very primness of appearance accentuates the grim memories

of its black past, and it has at least worn bravely through the crowded deep-stained centuries. Now we dive under the Tower Bridge, and the dingy warehouses and lines of shipping glide past on either bow as the *LYDIA* settles steadily to her work. Three hoys are forging slowly up the stream towards us; the sun glints pleasantly upon their huge, dark red sails that are filled to cracking by a strong stern wind. They seem picturesquely out of place in this prosaic age, and there is a homely, old-fashioned smack about their very names. You can read them upon their bows as they surge by against the driving tide; —the *THOMAS SCHOLEY*, the *NINE ELMS*, and the *FARMER'S BOY*. They are past us, and the stern, dark tramp steamers upon either hand seem to have the air of sneering grimly at such toy-like, old-world craft.

Here, beyond that string of barges heaped with glittering coal, lies the *HERMANN*, of Bremerhaven, laden with ice. She is goodly to the eye, with her lofty, square-rigged spars tapering gracefully against the blue sky, her square black stern with its smart gold line, and her neat white deck-houses; yet she, too, seems but a dainty laggard upon an altered stage. Once all the seas were white with the fair sails of such as she, and surely one may spare a sigh for those more gracious years. The warehouses on either hand are giving way to wharves strewn with the plunder of the richest city in the world. Here are iron works with heaps of tubing, oil wharves with piles of casks, boiler works, chemical works, cold storage wharves. There is a timber wharf with wood in every shape and form, from huge grey trunks, with the memory of the forest breezes yet in their scarce cold sap, to mammoth yellow heaps of trim, sawn planks.

There is much colour on the river as that great alchemist the sun gleams out, changing the brown muddy water into liquid gold. Here is a sight to please an artist's eye; a huge clumsy hoy, the *WATER LILY* of Harwich, staggering up-stream with such a stack of yellow hay aboard that the spread of her great red spritsail is curtailed. Her skipper stands at the gilded wheel with his wife beside him; good solid homely folk, whose faces the salt winds have tanned to the colour of their sails. When he or his mate would go forward they must climb a ladder and cross the great golden stack that seems too huge and top-heavy for their craft. They sweep past us, a blaze of colour in the

sunlight, and round this bend Greenwich, with its two domes towering over pillars and colonnades of dirty white, swims into view.

Then down the long grey curves we slide until Greenwich, gleaming whitely, is but a memory, until squalid Woolwich is left far astern, until the banks have crept away from either rail and are well-nigh bare of huddling, close-packed wharves. We are upon the lonelier river, and have space to mark the scattered traffic of the Thames. Now it is a heavy cattle-boat limping past us upon its way up-stream, with its raffle of pens and its sour sweet reek that comes across the water. Then we curtsey and dance our way upon the ripples past a white timber-boat from Norway, sadly lopsided, thanks to a shifted cargo. Erith is reached and passed, and the picturesque old training-ship beyond the bend, and now we strain steadily for Gravesend. The river is glimmering beneath the sunshine, but the headwind is delaying us sadly, for even here the conflict of wind and tide are lashing the water into a miniature sea. When the grey, sad, old town is reached and we have threaded our way through the crowded shipping, the river widens, and here there is a most definite lop upon the water. The *LYDIA*, too long for her beam, strains and pitches badly, and in a little while I am luckless enough to incur the loud-voiced reproaches of my shipmates. Perhaps I was dreaming of that day of triumph long ago, when Francis Drake and his *GOLDEN HIND*, deep laden with bright gold and brighter honour, passed up the Thames to hear the praises of the Virgin Queen; or perhaps around the long curve I was unduly anxious to save ground, and did not allow enough for the treacherous mud-flats. At any rate, the *LYDIA* runs heavily a-ground, and looks like sticking upon a falling tide. But *B.* and the engine rise to the occasion, the latter for once consenting to reverse, and we grind our way to safety in a long mud-churned curve.

The river grows ever wider as we plough along, and there is certainly more sea than the *LYDIA* cares about. There is no denying it; she was a disappointing sea-boat. *B.* pushes her as best he can, for we know well that when the tide begins to make upwards our progress will be small. The low dim shores upon either bow are wild and lonely, and the brown mud-flats revealed by the falling tide give a touch of dreariness to the scene. And yet, somehow, there is something about it all that appeals more

strongly to our hearts than the smooth prettiness of the Upper Thames. Here, at least, is a world untortured into shapeliness by the cunning, relentless hand of man.

A flag-staff leaps up out of the misty distance, and we know that we are nearing Hole Haven and our journey's end. Behind that slim white spar lies Canvey Island, the ancient home of smugglers, with its little, half Dutch village that three hundred years have lacked the power to change. We do not readily forget our first entrance to the quaint little port, when we headed the *LYDIA* straight through the dusk in our ignorance of the channel. A certain rescuing coastguard reaped rich harvest upon that occasion, which was but an incident in the course of a rash and well-nigh fatal attempt to take our boat round to Yarmouth; and we are wiser now. We pick out the landmarks with the cunning of old salts, and bring the *LYDIA* to an anchorage without mishap.

Many such voyages, not all as peaceful or free from peril as the one that I have sketched, did we make in the course of two golden summers, and they are pleasant to remember now that the *LYDIA* has passed to the Valhalla of her kind. I am conscious that I have sadly failed to reproduce the fascination of the old grey river; the charm of its deep-sea ships, the charm of its wild red sunsets, and the charm of London City dimly seen through the deep blue haze. Yet is it very real and strong to those with eyes to see, and generous to its lovers of memories that the long years may scarcely take away.

JOHN BARNETT

THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS

A CONSPICUOUS object in the House of Commons is a large armchair of heavy oak, upholstered in dark green leather, at the bar, raised a few feet above the level of the floor, just inside the swing-doors of the main entrance to the Chamber. It is the Serjeant-at-Arms's chair. The Serjeant-at-Arms is the chief executive officer of the House of Commons. He it is who is charged with the duty of preserving decorum in the Chamber and its precincts, of executing the warrants of the House against persons it has adjudged guilty of breaches of its privileges or contempt of its dignity ; and it is he who backs with force, when force is necessary, the "Order, order !" of Mr. Speaker. He sits in his chair, facing the Speaker, picturesquely clad in a black cut-away coat, open at the breast to show the daintiest of ruffles in the whitest of cambric (of which dandies in the times of the Georges were so fond), knee-breeches, black silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles ; and, as the symbol of the power and authority of his office, a rapier in its scabbard is girt to his side. Yet his voice has never been heard in the House. It is rarely necessary for the Speaker to give him an order in words, and a reply or explanation from him is never needed.

The Serjeant-at-Arms is appointed by the King personally. He receives a salary of £1,200, and has an official residence in the Palace of Westminster. The deputy Serjeant-at-Arms, who, wearing the same official dress as the Serjeant-at-Arms, takes turns at sitting on guard in the big chair at the bar, has a salary of £800 a year, and also lives in the palace rent free. There is also an assistant Serjeant-at-Arms, who, however, never appears on the floor of the House, but attends to the administrative work of the office outside the Chamber. He has £500 a year and £150 as an allowance for a house. The department of the Serjeant-at-Arms costs altogether £10,000 a year, for, in addition

to his deputy and assistant, there are also two door-keepers and nineteen messengers (recognised by their brass chains and badges of Mercury), who are his first reserves in the maintenance of order in the House, and many attendants and assistants of various kinds.

It is not alone to "strangers" who have offended the dignity and majesty of the House of Commons that the Serjeant-at-Arms is an awe-inspiring personage. Even the representatives of the people may have occasion to shiver at the dread touch of his hand on their shoulder. Of the large number of new Members returned at the General Election, few are probably aware of the fact (which, indeed, is not generally known even to old Members) that the Clock Tower contains a suite of rooms for the confinement of legislators who may be pronounced guilty by the House of some serious breach of its privileges or some outrage on its decorum. A Member of Parliament arrested on the warrant of the Speaker was formerly sent, like strangers guilty of breaches of privilege, to Newgate or to the Tower. But in the building of the Palace of Westminster prison-accommodation was specially provided for legislators and strangers committed by the House to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms.

The prison of the House of Commons is situated about half-way up the Clock Tower, and under the home of that popular London celebrity, Big Ben, probably the best known clock in the whole world. There are two suites of apartments, each consisting of two bed-rooms,—one for the prisoner, and the other for one of the Serjeant-at-Arms's messengers, who acts as gaoler—and a sitting-room. There is, therefore, accommodation for two prisoners and two gaolers in the Clock Tower, which so far has been found more than sufficient.

Access to these rooms is obtained only through the residence of the Serjeant-at-Arms, who is responsible for the safe keeping of a prisoner of Parliament. Their windows command a view of the Thames and Westminster Bridge on one side, and of Palace Yard on the other. Imprisonment under any conditions is, perhaps, an undesirable position, but it must be said that in the Clock Tower it is deprived of all its terrors and most of its inconveniences. The prisoner may rise when he pleases; his meals are supplied from the catering department of the House of Commons, and he can have what he likes,—at his own expense. After breakfast he is allowed an hour's recreation on the terrace, accompanied by his gaoler and a police-officer in plain clothes,

and he may take the air also in the evening. Should his term of imprisonment extend over Sunday, he may attend service in St. John's Church, close to the Palace of Westminster, to which he is accompanied by his guards.

The practice of the House of Commons, in recent times, was to commit a person guilty of any violation of its privileges to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms, to be detained during its pleasure. The imprisonment generally continued until the prisoner expressed contrition for his offence, or the House resolved that he be discharged. But before he was free to go he had to pay a substantial fee to the Serjeant-at-Arms for locking him up, and seeing that he did not escape. The last occupant of the prison was Mr. Bradlaugh, the Member for Northampton. His confinement for twenty-four hours, in 1880, was an episode in his exciting contest with the House of Commons on his claim to be allowed, as an atheist, to take his seat without having to use, in the oath of allegiance, the expression, *So help me God!* Mr. Bradlaugh in a conversation about his prison experiences stated that, while the quarters were comfortable and the confinement by no means irksome, the terrible reverberation of the bells, when Big Ben struck the quarters and the hours, allowed him but little sleep.

Contumacy on the part of a Member of Parliament nowadays would hardly be visited by imprisonment. Among the expressions which are considered out of order are treasonable or seditious words, the use of the Sovereign's name insultingly, or with a view to influence debate, offensive or insulting references to the character and proceedings of Parliament, personal attacks on Members of the House, allusions to matters pending judicial decision in the courts of law, and reflections on judges or other persons in high authority. The Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, has also the power, after having called attention three times to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance, or in tedious repetition, to direct him to discontinue his speech. If a Member's conduct is grossly disorderly, or if he refuses to apologise for an unparliamentary expression, the Speaker or Chairman orders him to withdraw immediately from the House and its precincts for the remainder of the sitting, and should he refuse to leave he is forcibly removed by the Serjeant-at-Arms and his messengers. If suspension for the remainder of the sitting be deemed by the Speaker or the Chairman an

inadequate punishment for the breach of order, the offending Member may be named. The Speaker or the Chairman simply says, "I name you, James Thomas Millwright." The motion of suspension which follows the naming of a Member is moved by the Leader of the House, or, in his absence, by another Minister. It is simply and briefly worded, to this effect: "I beg to move that James Thomas Millwright, Member for Little Peddlington, be suspended from the service of the House." It is put to the House immediately, no amendment or debate, or even an explanation by the offending Member, being allowed. If the offence has been committed in Committee, the proceedings are at once suspended, the Speaker is sent for, the House resumes, and the Chairman reports the circumstances. The motion of suspension is then moved by the Minister and put by the Speaker. The Member thus suspended must forthwith quit the precincts of the House, a term officially interpreted as "the area within the walls of the Palace of Westminster." It will be noticed that the period of suspension is not mentioned in the motion. Formerly, the Standing Orders provided that for the first offence it was to be one week, for the second a fortnight, and for each further offence one month. But by amendments to the Orders made in February, 1902, the suspension continues in force till the end of the Session, unless previously rescinded. Suspension involves the forfeiture of the right of entry to the lobby, the smoking-room and dining-room, the library, the terrace, and, indeed, to any portion of the Palace; but it does not exempt the Member from serving on any Committee for the consideration of a Private Bill to which he has been appointed, which is considered an additional hardship.

If too large a number of Members to be coped with effectively by the force at the command of the Serjeant-at-Arms disregard the authority of the Chair, the Speaker, by powers vested in him in February, 1902, may forthwith adjourn the House. The new Standing Order was designed to cope with such a scene of disorder as that which occurred a short time previously, when a force of police was brought into the Chamber by Mr. Speaker Gully to remove a number of the Irish Members who, as a protest against being closed, refused to take part in the division. "In the case of grave disorder, arising in the House," it runs, "the Speaker may, if he thinks it necessary to do so, adjourn the House without question put, or suspend any sitting for a time to

be named by him." In other words, the Speaker can turn out the lights and the reporters, leaving the disorderly Members to cool their anger in privacy and in darkness.

The House has also the power of expulsion. This punishment is resorted to only in the case of a Member guilty of a gross criminal offence. Strangely enough, it does not disqualify for re-election, if the expelled Member could persuade a constituency to accept him. But to name a Member is the highest coercive authority vested in the Speaker, or Chairman, for dealing with disorderly conduct in the House.

But only those who have had the good fortune to be present in the House of Commons on one of those rare occasions when some violator of the privileges of the Legislature is brought to the bar for judgment have seen the Serjeant-at-Arms in all his glory. Parliament can itself redress its wrongs and vindicate its privileges. It acknowledges no higher authority. It has the power summarily to punish disobedience of its orders and mandates, indignities offered to its proceedings, assaults upon the persons, or reflections upon the characters, of its Members, or interference with its officers in the discharge of their duties. The Serjeant-at-Arms can arrest, under the warrant of the Speaker issued by order of the House, any person anywhere within the limits of the kingdom. In the execution of the warrant he can call on the aid of the civil power. If he thinks it necessary he can even summon the military to his assistance. He can break into a private residence between sunrise and sunset, if he has reason to suspect that the person he is in search of is inside.

The Serjeant-at-Arms brings his prisoner to the House of Commons. A brass rod is pulled out from the receptacle in which it is telescoped, and stretched across the line which marks the technical boundary of the Chamber at the bar. The sight of that glittering rod is then as thrilling as the spectacle of the judge fixing on his black cap to impose the sentence of death. Behind the rod stands the prisoner. To his right is the Serjeant-at-Arms, carrying the glittering mace on his shoulder. At the other end of the Chamber, standing on the dais of the Chair, is Mr. Speaker, in his flowing silk gown, his face sternly set under his huge wig,—an awful figure indeed—delivering in the weightiest words he can command, amid the dramatic hush of the crowded Chamber, the sentence or reprimand of the House on the scorner or violator of its ancient privileges.

In former times the prisoner at the bar was compelled to receive judgment kneeling. In February, 1751, a Scottish gentleman named Alexander Murray (brother of the Master of Elibank), having, in the course of a contested election at Westminster, under the very shadow of the House, spoken disrespectfully of the authority of that august assembly, was brought to the bar in custody. But so unimpressed was he by the crowded benches, by Mr. Speaker Onslow in wig and gown, by the Serjeant-at-Arms with the mace on his shoulder, that he flatly declined to kneel, though the Speaker sternly roared at him, "Your obeisance, sir! You forget yourself! On your knees, sir!" "Sir," said Murray, "I beg to be excused; I never kneel but to God." "On your knees, sir!" again cried the Speaker. "Your obeisance,—you must kneel." But down on his knees Murray stoutly declined to go. "That," said he, "is an attitude of humbleness which I adopt only when I confess my sins to the Almighty." The House declared that this obstinacy aggravated his original offence. "Having in a most insolent, audacious manner, at the bar of the House, absolutely refused to go upon his knees," so ran the resolution of the House, "he is guilty of a high and most dangerous contempt of the authority and privileges of this House." Murray was committed to Newgate, and so close was his confinement that he was denied the visits of friends, and the use of pen, ink, and paper. Committal to prison by Parliament lapses at the end of the Session. Accordingly, when Parliament was prorogued the doors of Murray's prison had to be flung open. The House of Commons, however, was not satisfied that three or four months' incarceration had adequately purged the Scotsman of his audacious offence. Next Session a fresh warrant for his committal was made out and the Serjeant-at-Arms went to his house to arrest him; but he had fled, and though a reward of £500 was offered for his discovery, he was never captured.

Twenty years afterwards the custom requiring prisoners to kneel at the bar of the House of Commons was abolished. The last prisoner to suffer this indignity was a journalist, Mr. Baldwin, the publisher of *THE ST. JAMES'S CHRONICLE*. On March 14th, 1771, he was arrested for publishing a report of the proceedings of the House, and was compelled to prostrate himself abjectly at the bar while the Speaker scolded him for having dared to inform the electors of the doings of their representatives in Parliament. In 1772 a Standing Order was passed,—inspired,

as John Hatsell, the Clerk of the House, ingenuously suggests, by "the humanity of the House"—by which it was ordered that in future delinquents should receive the Speaker's judgment standing. Perhaps the action of the House was accelerated by the cutting irony of the remark of Baldwin. On rising from his knees, after being censured, he said as he brushed the dust from his clothes, "What a damned dirty House." Perhaps the House preferred to allow culprits to stand at the bar rather than run the risk, by making them kneel, of exposing its majestic self any longer to such ridicule.

The Peers, however, have never formally renounced this custom by Standing Order. Warren Hastings was obliged to kneel at the bar of the House of Lords on being admitted to bail, in 1787, on his impeachment; and again, at the opening of his trial in the following year, he remained on his knees until directed to rise by the Lord Chancellor. "I can," he afterwards wrote, half pathetically and half indignantly, "with truth affirm that I have borne with indifference all the base treatment I have had dealt to me,—all except the ignominious ceremonial of kneeling before the House." Even on being called to the bar to hear his acquittal announced by the Lord Chancellor, eight years subsequently, he had to undergo the same humiliating ordeal. But the Lords have not for many years now required a prisoner at the bar to kneel.

Persons of all sorts and descriptions, as the journals of the House show, have stood at the bar of the Commons not only for disobedience of the orders of the House, for indignities offered to its character or proceedings, for insults to Members, for reflections on their character and conduct in Parliament, for interference with the officers of the House in the discharge of their duties, but also to give evidence in enquiries instituted by the House, to plead some cause, or to receive the thanks of the House for services to the State. Samuel Pepys has stood there, to defend himself against charges of dereliction of duty as an official of the Navy Office. To fortify himself for the ordeal he drank at home half a pint of mulled sack, and just before being called to the bar he added a dram of brandy. So completely did he answer the accusations that he and his fellow officials were acquitted of all blame. Titus Oates, the perjurer, has stood there to relate the particulars of his Popish Plot. The great Duke of Wellington received at the bar the thanks of the

House of Commons for his services in the Peninsular Campaign. Mrs. Clarke, the discarded mistress of the Duke of York, appeared there to give evidence in support of the charge brought against his Royal Highness of having, as Commander-in-Chief, bartered in Army Commissions, a charge that was declared not proven, though it led to the Duke's resignation. Warren Hastings stood there as a witness, close on thirty years after his impeachment. Members cheered him on his appearance, and when he retired they rose and uncovered. Daniel O'Connell, the first Roman Catholic elected to Parliament since the Revolution, stood there in 1828 to plead, and plead in vain, that he should be allowed to take his seat without subscribing to the oath which declared his faith to be idolatrous and blasphemous, an abjuration, however, that was abolished by the Catholic Emancipation Act which was passed in the following year.

Persons not so distinguished or notorious have also stood at the bar, in the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms, charged with whimsical breaches of privilege. A man named Hyde, who tried to obtain admission to Westminster Hall at the impeachment of Warren Hastings, was rudely jostled into Palace Yard by a policeman. Hyde had the constable served with a summons for assault. For this Hyde was arrested by the Serjeant-at-Arms, on the order of the House, brought to the bar, and actually committed to prison, for a breach of privilege in having attempted to bring an officer of the House before the ordinary legal tribunals of the land. But perhaps the most amusing instance remains to be told. Dick Martin, a well-known Irish Member in the early years of the nineteenth century (founder of the excellent Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), was greatly perturbed to find in a London newspaper some passages of his speech in the House, the previous night, printed in italics. He complained to the House of having been misrepresented, and the reporter (who happened to be a fellow-countryman of Mr. Martin) was brought to the bar for a breach of privilege. The journalist pleaded that the report was absolutely correct. "It may be," replied the indignant Irish representative, "but I defy the gentleman to prove that I spoke in italics." In this case the culprit was dismissed amid the laughter of the House.

MICHAEL MACDONAGH

IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF CAMOËNS

At the mouth of the wide delta formed by the Canton river the Portuguese town of Macao marks the introduction of European commerce to far Cathay. This outpost of maritime Portugal was the thin end of the wedge intended to cleave a way into the heart of the Chinese Empire, an unknown region veiled in the clouds of fancy and regarded as a virgin source of fabulous wealth. The establishment of a foreign colony was contrary to the letter of Chinese law, but the astute Portuguese obtained a measure of toleration by dislodging a band of pirates who infested those island-studded waters, concealing their booty in the vast caves which honeycombed the splintered cliffs overshadowing the intricate channels. Sheds were erected on pretence of paying tribute to China. A mandarin ostensibly governed Macao in the name of the emperor, and a wall built across the narrow isthmus occupied by the new settlements prevented Europeans from entering Chinese cities or passing their own jealously watched boundaries. The wave of fresh life beating on the shore of stagnant China wore away the national prejudice; the mandarins of the overcrowded empire began to recognise the advantages of foreign commerce, and the colonisation of Macao by Portuguese merchants, with their wives and families, met with little opposition from the Chinese Government.

Crumbling streets of white houses gay with blue porcelain tiles, and broad squares shaded by pink oleanders, and feathery pepper trees overhanging marble fountains, recall the palmy days of medieval Portugal, the exotic colouring of the picture being emphasised by the contrasting character of the Chinese background. The twin towers of a ruined cathedral crown the hill sloping to the exquisite bay; fantastic islets lie like a broken string of amethysts on an azure shield, and the mountain peaks bounding the prospect cut sharply into the

shadowless atmosphere which interprets the harsh realism of Chinese art. The Praya, loveliest of marine esplanades, follows the curving coast line, a lovely scene when bathed in the radiance of a cloudless sunset. A motley population throngs the rickety wharves, European, Chinese, and Malay. Women in lace mantillas, with red flowers in their black hair, wear the hereditary costume retained since the days when the galleons and caravels of the great navigating power bore their enterprising ancestors to these Eastern shores. The commercial importance of Macao is still considerable, though she has become an Oriental Monaco, preying on the ruling passion of China and reaping a rich harvest from myriad victims. The gaming-tables in Portuguese hands pay for all the municipal costs of Macao, and provide a large surplus for the officials of the gambling dens, though all provisions and beverages are supplied gratis to the players. Fan-tan, the universal game, has the merit of ensuring fair play, the method of doubling the fourth part of the stake, and the rules concerning the distribution of chances, being simple and straightforward. The Chinese sit round the red tables on the ground-floor, European players being accommodated in an open balcony overhead, their stakes and winnings conveyed up and down in baskets slung on wires, like the receptacles used for giving change in European shops. Obsequious attendants press supplies of tea, lemonade, sandwiches, and fruit upon the visitors, and the Chinese players observe an unbroken silence, for these inveterate gamblers are far too eager for speech, though no trace of excitement stirs their stolid countenances. Stakes are low, but tables remain full, for crowds come in when shops are shut during the noonday heat to permit of the siesta enjoined by Lusitanian tradition.

An old-world charm lingers round the arched halls and colonnades of the great silk factory, for the famous Portuguese industry manifests the poetry if not the dignity of labour. Every stage of the silk process may be studied, from the worm on the mulberry leaf to rich brocades or fairy fabrics apparently spun from moonlight and mist. Here we may imagine ourselves in the Lusitania of the West. Dark-eyed mothers rock brown babies cradled at their feet: sunburnt children with tangled curls wind the shining skeins, or carry baskets of cocoons; and girls with flower-decked hair croon the old ballads of their race as they ply the darting shuttles. Stately women with red bandannas twisted round

their glossy braids, keep order in the noisy throng, and plunge the webs of white or primrose silk into boiling cauldrons. Ragged boys, whose energy appears restricted to their tongues, lie on the brick floor, their bare feet swinging the cords of the huge fans which dry the sodden skeins, the frequent cessation of the winnowing process meeting with kicks from exasperated foremen emerging from clouds of steam, or with torrents of abuse from female custodians. The shadowy vistas, the ancient machinery, the gleam of feathery floss from whirring wheels, the glowing colours of silks hanging from rafters above the dyeing vats, and the sumptuous designs growing into floral beauty on the hand-loom, combine with picturesque individuality and the grace of movement inherent in Latin blood to produce a dramatic scene suggestive of CARMEN. Life in the sunny square, where the Portuguese inhabitants solace themselves with smoking, sipping sherbets, and listening to an effete military band, shows that Macao is Portugal with a difference. The unsympathetic atmosphere of China, the pig-tailed contingent of contemptuous Celestials in their long blue robes, and the apathetic sadness which invariably overshadows a far-away settlement, convey a sense of depression in this Lusitanian town planted three centuries ago on alien shores. *Ave Maria* peals from the tall belfries of white-washed churches furnished with colossal crucifixes and crudely coloured images of Mary and the saints; but devotion has dwindled in this uncongenial environment, and the fiery fervour of olden days, when the Jesuits lighted the torch of faith in Eastern lands, has long since cooled.

Spacious houses dot the green hillside, the modest mansions of Portuguese officials. The white villa and ilex-shadowed garden of Luis de Camoëns, the exiled poet of medieval Portugal, remaining unchanged, and affording the climax of interest to the European traveller.

A scion of an ancient but untitled family connected with Don Jaime's brilliant and cultured court, Luis de Camoëns possessed that *Foro de Fidalgo*, or patent of gentle birth constituting a Lusitanian aristocrat, rather than the title which in medieval Portugal, as in modern England, became cheapened by indiscriminate bestowal. At the royal palace he met Caterina de Atayde, a beautiful maid-of-honour to Catherine of Austria, and the face of the world was changed for the lover, whose passionate heart recognised the court lady as the inspiration of his life.

She became the poet's Beatrice, whom he worshipped with ideal devotion. The joy of mutual love was darkened by continual peril, for death was the frequent penalty of wooing a maid-of-honour in those despotic days. As Caterina leaned from her lattice in the moonlight, to hear the serenade sung in the black shadow of a towering cypress, the tryst was discovered, and banishment to the wild solitudes of the upper Tagus was the poet's first taste of exile. Sorrow and separation only tuned his lute to sweeter music, and Caterina's powerful family procured his further banishment to Northern Africa, where "he baptized his sword and washed his spear" in constant warfare with savage tribes, varied by brief spells of lion-hunting in the Numidian mountains. At length the three weary years dropped into their grave of sand, and Camoëns returned to Portugal, but, having wounded a palace lackey in a street brawl, he was punished by a third exile to India. In the bitterness of his aching heart he complained that "sins only worthy of three days in Purgatory are chastised with three thousand days of vengeance," literally nine years of cruel expatriation. Wearying of Goa, then the stately capital of Portuguese India in the zenith of her splendour, the spirit of adventure lured him to the Spice Islands of the tropic seas, which impressed their enchanting loveliness on mind and fancy. A raid on Cochin China, to aid a local rajah who sought Portuguese protection, followed the dreamy cruise among the palm groves and nutmeg forests of the fairy archipelago, and in 1556 Camoëns was ordered to China, where Portuguese villainy had provoked reprisals, Mendez Pinto and his band of merchant adventurers having embroiled their Government by robbing the treasure tombs of seventeen Chinese kings.

The prosaic duties of a Portuguese commissary, the weariness of exile, the pain of separation from all he held dear, and the constant fret of enforced idleness were ingredients of the bitter cup which eventually braced and concentrated the commanding genius of the court poet. The noble epic of the *LUSIADS*, celebrating the Portuguese conquest of India, was already begun, but the dismal isolation of Macao and the absence of social distractions in the actual China, which proved such a melancholy travesty of the Cathay of dreamland, seem to have matured and perfected the poet's powers. The immortal song was completed in the rugged grotto above the grey rocks which bound the secluded garden from whence the exile's longing eyes gazed so

wearily on the dividing seas. The music of the waves beating upon the crags echoes through the glorious epic, wherein mythology and history, love and ambition, hope and despair, weave the changing harmonies of the choral song which immortalised the poet and his theme.

Outside the dusky grotto the bronze bust of Camoëns crowns a monolith wreathed with the laurels which now make an ever-green wall round the historic spot. Every side of the grey obelisk bears a tribute of laudatory inscriptions from the great poets of other lands, to whom this dream-haunted garden of Macao is holy ground.

Distinguished by personal beauty, winning charm, and dauntless courage, Camoëns was swayed by the ruling passions of patriotism and love. The reckless improvidence and immoral lapses of a headstrong and turbulent youth marred the early promise of greatness, but the winds of adversity scattered the leaves and enabled the fruit to set, though the fame destined to ring across the world came too late to bring any personal consolation. Few of the poet's own contemporaries believed that "the idle singer of an empty day" in the brilliant court of medieval Portugal would afterwards be crowned among the immortals, though the passion and pathos of the *LUSIADS* at once aroused the attention of literary Europe. Camoëns leaves on record that his daily solace as he sat in the dim twilight of his wave-washed grotto was the ancient psalm of exile, *By the Waters of Babylon*. The weeping willows planted on the edge of the little promontory carried out the mournful symbolism of the Hebrew chant as they swayed to the rhythmic murmur of wind and tide, while the banished poet wove his own sad story into the sacred song. The melody of the *LUSIADS* was made in heaviness and the exile's harp tuned in a strange land, but the lofty strains of eternal music rang out clear and true from his unconquered soul.

After long years of sorrow and suffering Camoëns was recalled to Portugal, but relentless fate still pursued him. Escaping as by a miracle from shipwreck, he reached land on a floating spar, choosing to save his literary work at the cost of all he possessed. The modest competence amassed in Macao was lost, and he was utterly destitute. He speaks of "woes succeeding woes," but the cruellest blow was yet to fall. The long and perilous voyage, delayed by shipwreck, poverty, and sickness, was nearly over,

and brightening hope revived in the exile's heart as he drew near home, but when the ship touched at some Mediterranean port the tidings of Caterina's death awaited him. True to the last, she left him the riband from her hair, loosening the golden tresses with her dying hands, and praying only that her faithful lover might return in time to close the longing eyes described in one of his exquisite sonnets as "the sweetest eyes that e'er were seen."

Plague was raging at Lisbon; the Court had fled to the summer palace of Almeiram, and no place was found for a poor poet, though even the Inquisition dared not molest the author of the *LUSIADS*. A faithful Javanese servant begged for his master during the night, for they both depended on public charity for their daily bread. "My Javan asketh of me only two groats to buy my charcoal, and I have them not to give!" writes the heart-broken poet, unable even to ward off cold, intensified by years of tropical heat, with the tiny brazier of the Portuguese poor. Tradition tells that Camoëns himself begged for bread on the Alcantara bridge, generally thronged with passengers, so dire were the straits to which the greatest genius of Portugal was reduced. A Carmelite friar who administered the last sacraments to the poet, as he rapidly sank beneath the burden of poverty, neglect, and forgetfulness, asserts that he died in the hospital without even a sheet to cover him, for the charitable institutions of the Middle Ages could seldom afford more than bare shelter and scanty food for the multitude of homeless and destitute applicants. Even the grave of Camoëns is now unknown, for the church wherein he was buried was soon afterwards destroyed by an earthquake, and the site was lost. The tragic story of this ruined life bears eternal witness to the ingratitude of the nation whose fame was immortalised by the stately epic of the *LUSIADS*.

Student, soldier, traveller, naturalist, historian, musician, and poet,—the prince of Portuguese song crowded into one brief career enough of stirring events to fill centuries of ordinary life. The tumultuous episodes of a stormy youth were bitterly atoned for, though the undisciplined character gained strength and steadfastness from the furnace of sorrows into which it was plunged to harden and temper the yielding steel. Caterina's short life of thirty years was not spent in vain, for the golden thread of an ideal and chivalric love inextricably woven into the warp and

woof of a many-sided temperament was the infrangible cord which upheld the poet through the long years of adversity, those "sighing years" to which "the poor, tired, wandering singer" alludes so mournfully.

The deep sadness of that bitter past seems still brooding over the dim garden of Macao, where the thronging shadows of the hoary ilex-trees shroud the green pleasaunce in perpetual gloom. The garish sunshine sparkling on blue sea and purple mountain fails to penetrate the dense black canopy of over-arching boughs; the sombre avenues, the moss-clad grotto, and the whispering willows on the rocks suggest vivid impressions of the hapless poet, once the living centre of the unaltered landscape. The white villa of Camoëns, still a Government office, retains no memorial of the illustrious exile beyond a battered writing-table of doubtful authenticity, and the garden which he loved remains more closely associated with his memory than the house where he spent the prosaic hours of uncongenial toil. The green boughs of shining laurel now growing in wild luxuriance round the bronze bust and marble column present the only new feature in the consecrated scene of sorrow and song, investing it, as though in bitter irony, with memorial wreaths of the fame which forgot the living but crowned the dead with unfading glory.

THE PERVERSITY OF GOLF-BALLS

Of all the balls used in the realm of sport the golf-ball is the most perverse. A football has been known to seek adventures on the sluggish waters of a canal ; a cricket-ball has been extracted from out of a rainwater pipe ; while tennis-balls have behaved in an extraordinary manner on more than one occasion, even to the length of splitting a lady's parasol ; but the ways of the balls used in these sports are angelic in comparison with the habits and customs of the golf-ball.

The golf-ball, notwithstanding its core of india-rubber, is the most hard-hearted ball fabricated. A player may imagine that he is on good terms with his ball when he is playing at the top of his game ; but careful study of the golf-ball and its peculiar code of morals only shows that the little white pillule on these occasions is biding its time, and is merely encouraging the man behind the club for the purpose of letting him down badly when confidence has lured him on to taking upon himself some heavy task. And not only is it conscienceless, but it is also entirely bereft of the sporting instinct.

Give a golf-ball half a chance to lose itself, and it will immediately accept it. No ball with a grain of sporting instinct, after it had been hit hard and true from off the tee, would seek to hide itself, but a golf-ball will do so without a moment's thought. Indeed, to achieve its object when the lie is too good for it to hide in any other manner, this conscienceless sphere will so disguise its appearance that amid the daisies it will take the most lynx-(or should it be links-) eyed of caddies to differentiate it from those humble flowers that invoke the poet's praise and the golfer's anathema. How different from the Haskell is the football ! No one ever saw a football looking like a daisy.

The naturalist, desirous of emphasising the marvels of Nature, is never tired of bringing before the notice of local branches of the

Young Men's Christian Association the marvellous adaptability of the chameleon. "What other beast," says the lecturer on these occasions, "can in itself rival the colour scheme of a pyrotechnical display at the Crystal Palace?" He never receives a reply; yet every golfer knows that the beastly ball he so diligently pursues can defeat the chameleon at its own game,—six up and four to play—with the greatest regularity.

White, green, sand-coloured, yellow, or black, the golf-ball can adapt itself to its surroundings in every phase of lie. The story to the effect that a golf-ball was seen to burst itself in a vain endeavour to assume a slightly cerulean hue after its owner had played five-and-twenty strokes in the bunker guarding the Death or Glory hole is a lie of another description.

There is a farmer somewhere in the Isle of Wight who has discovered in a local golf-club a scheme for amassing wealth that will speedily put him in position to give libraries to all applicants. It will be assumed that the Cræsus in embryo farms out all his family and his wife's relations as caddies. Such an approach-shot, however, is short of the truth, for in reality he is an agriculturist of an entirely different character, and does not even train his live-stock to simulate death when a golf-ball alights in anything approaching close proximity to them. It is common knowledge that certain of the unscrupulous have ere this trained fox-terriers to retrieve balls that alight at a hole that is blind to the driver who follows the short-sighted policy of not sending on an advance caddy; but it is not due to subterfuges such as this that Vectis claims a son of the soil who is willing to admit that farming as a profession has been too extensively deprecated.

The club in question is situated by the sad sea shore; the farm in question, some distance away, also runs down to the sands, that are as golden to their tenant as a Pierrot site at Scarborough is to the Municipal Fathers. The golfer proceeds to the tee-ing off spot, tees up his ball, mentally imagines that he is standing on a species of gridiron, and places his feet in the position required by a famous professional when instructing the neophyte how and how not to play,—in the latter of which pursuits, it may be said in passing, the golfer *in futuro* instinctively knows far more than his instructor. He draws his clubs back slowly, he keeps in his wrists, and his right elbow is glued to his side, while his eyes are riveted on the ball, but not so firmly that he cannot with their aid follow its course as it sails

gaily out to sea. The seasoned player likewise tees up the ball, but if the tee-ing ground is large enough he places his feet where he likes. The onlooker does not notice his elbows, and his wrists do not catch the eye, for everything about him works like part of an intricate machine possessing, what no machine can ever possess, a movement that is the epitome of all that is humanly graceful. The ball at first keeps low, so low indeed that it appears to be about to fly into the embrace of the all-embracing bunker, but at this juncture it rises majestically as an eagle ascends from its eyrie, and all the time the lonely watcher on the shore is praying for a stiff land-breeze. It comes; the ball gladly yields to its persuasive whispering to depart from the straight path of rectitude, and descends like a bolt from the blue into the waters that lave our shores. The golfer—what of him? He, after summing up the situation in a few well-chosen words, drops another ball, and plays his third plump into the bunker. Then cometh the—that is to say, the lonely watcher on the shore waiteth for the tide to turn and deposit at his feet the never-failing harvest of the sea. As the poet has truly said, "The sea hath its pearls."

Drive a golf-ball into the ocean well out of reach, and it will give a display of the natatory art that will make a Channel swimmer writhe with envy, while even the easy-going halibut will regard with jealousy its marvellous buoyancy. Take another ball, in every respect its counterpart, even to its inherent guile, and top your drive at the second,—what is the result? The sphere descends into the morass thoughtfully provided by a Green committee that is incorporated with the National Guild for the Promotion of Wading among Caddies; your partner asks if it was a new ball in a voice redolent with the sympathy engendered by two strokes in hand, and you say farewell both to the ball and to your faith in the floating ability possessed by india-rubber and gutta-percha. Can golf-balls swim? Of course. Will golf-balls swim? Not so long as there is a possible chance of their being recovered by their owners. It is, however, believed that no golf-ball can withstand the whistle of a caddy when, bereft of the white man's burden, the youth proceeds to the pool alone and lures the sphere from its depths by his persuasive note.

How full of resource is the golf-ball! It is never at a loss when desirous of causing annoyance. Once upon a time one

was driven off on the Chislehurst links that, finding no other method of getting itself disliked, sought shelter in the pocket of an innocent individual two hundred yards away from the player. It was not the ball that was lost on this occasion : its owner doubtless lost the hole, and the player driven into would have been justified in losing his temper ; but this last mentioned loss is extremely doubtful. Tempers are never lost on the links ; it is there that the mildest of men finds the temper that his friends never knew he possessed until at the twelfth hole he loses three balls in as many strokes when negotiating the hay-field that the committee playfully designates the carry from the tee ; then does he find the temper that proves him to be at heart a golfer.

In the course of a University golf match a year or two ago a ball, out of sheer desire for notoriety, ascended to the roof of the club-house at a critical point in the game. Most players in similar circumstances would, at the instance of the caddy, have appeared at the local Police Court the following day to answer a charge of assault and battery ; but the player was not one to give way to a fit of the Blues. "What do I do ?" said he, in a tone that indicated that, if necessary, he was prepared to drop another ball down the nearest chimney-pot and play it from where it lay. "Your best," laconically replied the referee. "Caddy, I'll have my ladder" (or words to that effect), continued the undefeated player, who, on that useful appendage to every golfers' kit being produced, quickly ascended to the roof, to the secret joy of a local builder who scented a job. On reaching the summit the player informed those below that the high sloping tiled bunker in front of him completely hid the green, whereupon a kindly soul on *terra firma* proceeded to the flag and emitted sounds resembling, to the best of his ability, the plaintive note of a hole seeking its mate. The ruse succeeded better than could have been expected, and the ball, rising to the occasion, dropped within ten feet of where it was required. Thus did guile meet guile.

Balls that sought to secret themselves have ere this lodged in hen-coops. Such lies would defeat the chicken-hearted player, but the golfer of spirit has been known to enter the coop and play the ball out, to the intense disappointment of the legitimate occupant, in whose breast hopes of hatching out a little rubber-coded had been suddenly raised.

At Bushey, some little time ago, a distinguished wielder of the

niblick was called upon to enter a pigsty to play his ball, which he most successfully extricated, although the tenant (who was a bit of a bore), disregarding all the rules of etiquette, protested loudly while the stroke was being made. Balls have attempted to escape from their owners by burglariously entering cottages through the window; and one had the extreme mortification of doing a good deed in spite of itself, for it broke the glass in front of a painting that was recognised by the driver of the ball as a Teniers worth £500.

It is needless to say that a ball which can, and does, play these tricks on the human intelligence will not hesitate to deceive an untutored quadruped. Dogs have been observed ere this carrying off a gutta ball under the impression that a succulent beef-bone had descended like the gentle rain from heaven for their special delectation, while strong men have kept nine couples and a four-ball match waiting seventeen and a half minutes by the clock while they argued out what ruling should apply to a ball that a neighbouring cow was masticating under the impression that it had picked up a delicate mouthful of hay. The man who did not play the ball argued that any ball must be played where it lay, saving in the case of it entering a rabbit-hole or, in the case of the Unatali or other African links, the den of a lion; no one disputed the ruling affecting lions' dens. The man who did play the ball, having failed to sustain the plea that he had driven out of bounds, held that as the cow was chewing the cud and the cud was originally grass, and the grass sprang from the ground, and that whereas in the first place the chewing process was not complete, and in the second that the ball lay in or on the cud, that he could drop a ball not nearer the hole, and play it without penalty. And then, when, in response to the question by what chain of falsehoods this exhibition of insanity was arrived at, the man who did responded that the cud was obviously ground under repair, the four-ball match malevolently and of malice prepense drove into them and changed the current of the conversation, with the result that the affrighted animal, galloping off in dismay, carried the ball two hundred and seventy-six yards nearer the hole and then restored it to its owner, who promptly claimed to have driven it three hundred and ninety-seven yards and the right to play it where it lay. In such manner are lifelong friendships sundered through the guile of the malevolent demon that dwells in the heart of every golf-ball.

THE TIGER THAT WAS NOT

It is grey dawn on the banks of the Perak River. The little Malay owl has uttered its last *kú-húp*; in every tree small birds are twittering and fluffing their feathers to warm themselves, and on all sides the jungle-cocks are shrilling a cheery defiance to one another. Sunken under an accumulation of ghost-like mists the wide expanse of river lies pale, drear, and chill. A faint saffron light in the east enables one dimly to discern upon the river bank a number of scattered dwellings, such as constitute a Malay village, and at the water's edge a long line of tethered house-boats, prahus, and dug-outs. One by one the Malays rouse themselves from sleep, and with eyes and brains still heavy with slumber, pull a scanty cotton cloth over shivering, rounded, backs, and make their way to the river where they perform their morning ablutions and repeat the morning prayer of the Mahommedan.

A few minutes later a glory of gold touches the saffron sky, tinges it, suffuses it, absorbs it,—and there is day. The sun springs above the horizon, shows his clear disc above the distant forest-covered mountains, and throws long horizontal shafts of light and warmth that dance upon the sparkling river and set coursing anew the blood of man and beast.

On one of the house-boats, whose Union Jack at the stern shows that she carries the District-Officer, the servants are laying breakfast, and preparations of a similar nature are going on in the next house-boat, whose flag of royal yellow betokens the presence of a member of the Sultan's family.

It was now nearly two weeks since a tiger had taken up its abode in a patch of *bluker*, or secondary forest, behind the village at which the house-boats are moored. Day and night it had terrified the villagers by roaring to a mate, and the local chief had applied for assistance to the Sultan's son, by whom, conjointly

with the District-Officer, the present arrangements for a drive had been made.

A Malay seated himself at a great brass gong hung in the rajah's boat, and began to beat the assembly-call. Before long a distant boat shot out into midstream, and moved in the direction of the sound. Then on all sides the bright surface of the water became dotted with black specks of various size all converging on the one point. The Malays whose houses were near at hand collected in small groups upon the bank. Round the landing-place prahus and dug-outs clustered thickly. Some held only a poler and a steersman, while others were laden to the water's edge with a crowd of Malays perched in ungainly bird-like attitudes, but in apparent comfort, upon the bare inch or two of the free-board. By the time that the party, of whom the writer was one, was ready to step on shore, some two hundred Malays had mustered on the bank. In this throng of men there was not one who was not armed. Nearly every man held a spear, many carried a dagger (*kris*) as well, and not a few showed a waist-belt loaded with an assortment of weapons that would not have disgraced the most piratical of marauders. The spears showed that a tiger-drive was contemplated, for across each, some eighteen inches below the point, a little piece of wood was lashed on at right angles to the shaft. This cross-bar is intended to prevent a wounded tiger from clawing its way up the spear-head that transfixes it to the man that holds the spear. Such men as owned, or had been able to borrow, a small dagger of a peculiar shape known as a *golok rembau*, exhibited their weapons with complacency and pride, for these daggers are supposed by the Malays to possess such extraordinary, even magical, properties that a tiger is powerless against them.

When the local chief announced that everything was ready, an old *pawang*, or sorcerer, stepped forward with a bunch of twigs of a tree for which a tiger is thought to have a peculiar dread. Holding this small bundle in both hands, he repeated over it the charm known as "that which closes the tiger's mouth," and then, after another incantation which was intended to prevent the tiger from winding us, proceeded to break the twigs into short fragments, which he distributed first among the shooters and then among the beaters. The ceremony did not take long, but by the time it was over, and the final words of advice, exhortation, and command had been said on every side, the sun was strong

enough to make the shade welcome, and without further delay the old chief led his picturesque throng of beaters down one path, while we set off along a track that took us into another part of the forest.

The direction that the drive was to take had been decided upon some days before, and a line along which the guns were to be stationed had already been cut through the forest. The line was broad enough to afford a fair shot, and had been more or less cleared of undergrowth and obstacles. For the benefit of those who do not know, I may say that such a line is not, or should not be, a straight one; for if the guns are all in the same straight line each man stands an excellent chance of being shot by his neighbours in the excitement of the moment.

The party consisted of nine guns, six Europeans and three Malay rajahs, and for each there had been erected in a tree a small platform made of lopped branches bound together with green rattans and screened with leafy boughs. The object of the platform is partly to keep the shooter safe above any danger from the tiger, but partly also to enable him to obtain the best possible view of the ground and to prevent the tiger from scenting him.

As soon as we had scrambled into our individual platforms, the Malays who had been our guides swarmed up adjacent trees, and, having first made sure that they had not intruded upon a nest of the great vicious red ants, selected comfortable perches from which to await the result of the drive. The beaters formed into line at a place some two or three miles away from the posts taken up by the guns. The forest that they had to beat out was a strip comparatively narrow in proportion to its length, lying between a Government bridle-path on the one side and a deep swamp on the other. It was most unlikely that the tiger would attempt to break out at the sides of the ground, and therefore no stops were posted.

We had not been long in our places when the preconcerted signal of a shot announced that the drive had begun. It would, however, be another two hours at least before the men would arrive at the line of guns, for beating in dense forest, if thoroughly carried out, is very slow work. Deep silence reigned through the part of the forest in which we were, a silence enhanced by the faint distant sounds of the occasional war-cry of the advancing Malays. A peacock-pheasant, whose persistent

scolding clatter, not unlike the note of a cackling barndoor hen, had warned every animal within hearing of our arrival, ceased its clamour at last, and recommenced its scratching among the fallen leaves. Two little birds,—the male, a brilliant black with a golden crown, and his mate, a sober russet brown—resumed the labour of feeding their speckled nestlings. A resplendent ground-thrush, gorgeous as a salmon-fly, which on our approach had hidden under some fallen leaves, regained its confidence, and came hopping out to continue its search for food. The life of every animal seemed to be a silent one. In the distance, it is true, a great rhinoceros-hornbill called from a tree-top to a mate afar off, and high over head, hidden in the blinding blue sky, a kite uttered at intervals its shrill querulous whistle. But these were the exceptions; at all hours and at all seasons the silence of the animals is one with the silence of the forest.

During the whole of the drive no animal larger than a mouse-deer appeared within sight of my platform; and, when finally the line of beaters reached the guns, we found that the drive was a blank. Some sambhur and barking deers had been seen by the other guns, but, since a tiger was our object, no one had fired at them.

The Malays were not only disappointed but much surprised at the failure of the drive. Day after day, and night after night, the tiger had been heard roaring in the area through which they had just beaten, and they could not understand why not a sign of it had been seen. They were positive that, since it was not in the ground which they had just covered, it must be lying up in a smaller strip of forest between the bridle-path and the Perak River.

After some short deliberation and argument, they went off without further delay to drive, and we stationed ourselves at intervals through the forest. There was no time to clear any lines, nor to erect platforms in the trees. We took up positions on foot, arranging ourselves in such order as we could, and each man knew, though he could not see, the situation of his neighbours on either side. At the place where the beaters formed into line, the bridle-path was about a mile from the river, while at the point where the guns were stationed, about a mile further up stream, river and path were within three hundred yards of one another. The ground to be beaten was thus a triangle; the beaters were at its base, and the guns at the apex. Behind the line of guns,

river and path diverged again, and between them lay a vast expanse of dense, heavily timbered forest for which it was thought that the tiger would make. We had not been long in our places before the beaters began to advance towards us. I studied the lie of the forest in my vicinity and the approaches by which an animal would be likely to come in my direction, and then fell to watching an interminable string of little black ants at my feet. They were migrating, but I could not see whence they came or whither they were going. The line that they followed was extraordinarily devious; up one side and down the other of a tree-stump, round three sides of a great boulder, over and along the roots, under a fallen log, the black line twisted and turned. There seemed to be no attempt to shorten or to improve upon the winding path selected by the leaders of the column. The little creatures moved in a line some six or seven deep, and for some reason, which it was difficult to discern, a constant succession of ants kept hurrying back through the ranks to communicate with the rear.

Suddenly there was a cry afar off: "Look out! The tiger is here!" How every feeling intensified at the sound! Not a soul was within sight, but one knew that the men who were hidden to right and to left had heard the words and had thrilled to them no less than oneself. The beaters were yet more than half a mile away, but it was not difficult to imagine the excitement that possessed them. Somewhere in the area encompassed by them and by the guns there was moving silently through the dense forest undergrowth the lithe powerful form of a tiger. We all knew it; it even seemed strange that the long string of ants should fail to know it and should continue their unheeding ceaseless hurrying. Somewhere near us the tiger was, or should be.

At the shout the men steadied themselves, moving to one side or the other in order to make the line of advance as perfect as possible. There was silence for a moment, and then a great voice shouted, "*Selawat* (prayer)." "*Selawat*," shouted everyone, and thereupon, somewhere in the long line, one of the men chanted aloud some verses of the Koran, concluding by shouting at the top of his voice the words of the creed of Islam: "*La' ila'hu illa 'llahu; wa Muhammedu'r—rasulu'llahi*. (There is no god but Allah, and Mahommed is the prophet of Allah);" and from every voice in the long array that was hidden up and

down the forest came the roar of the response of the final *Allah*. If a tiger is suddenly disturbed when lying up beside an animal that it has killed, or has cubs, or is wounded, or is for any other reason savage, it often gives utterance to an answering challenge which it not infrequently follows up by charging forthwith upon the men. I have more than once heard a sudden vibrating roar in reply to a cry of *selawat*, that has made the blood of the listeners run warm; and not a few Malays have been struck down with the expression of their faith upon their lips. Apart from its religious aspect, the use of the *selawat* is to enable the men to know whereabouts in the denseness and tangle of the forest undergrowth the animal is hidden.

On this occasion there was no reply to the long-drawn *Allah*, and after a pause, during which each man assured himself of his position with regard to his neighbours, the array of beaters slowly and carefully moved forward. At intervals the piercing war-cry of the Malays rose and rang up and down the line. Occasionally an order was shouted to close in on the right or to move up faster on the left, but otherwise the advance was made in greater silence than might have been expected. The men worked out the thickets with their spear-heads, and rapped their spear-butts upon the tree-trunks with a steadiness and thoroughness that would have been creditable in any pheasant-covert in England. They were, I may say, an exceptionally fine set of men. The Malays of Saiong are famous throughout Perak for their skill and daring in a tiger-drive; and on this occasion they were under the eye both of their Sultan's son and of the District-Officer.

Before long the cry arose again, "Here he is! Here he is!" Upon this the old chief in charge of the drive shouted an order. "*Tahan, tahan!* (Steady, hold steady!)." Down on a knee dropped every man of the two hundred that composed the line. Close to his side each man gripped his spear, with its point thrust upwards into the dark forest undergrowth in front of him. It was impossible to see the plainest object at a distance of more than twenty yards, and a tiger might crouch unseen within three yards of the most vigilant. Little doubt that each man eyed the cross-bar on his spear, and thought how very small and very near him it looked: it gave a pleasurable titillation of excitement amid the tumult of the numbers of the village; but its significance now became very real and very grim.

The chief shouted his order to the men to stand steady because he thought that, as the tiger had not by this time passed the guns, it must be aware of their position and intend to seek safety by breaking back through the line of beaters. Everyone knew what the chief thought, and waited, peering into the dark forest in front of him, in readiness for the next word of command. Then the chief shouted again. All leapt to their feet, ran forward a few yards, five or six perhaps or it may be even less, and then as suddenly stopped and knelt again. "Steady! Hold steady!" they shouted up and down the line, while all strained their eyes to catch a gleam of yellow in the heavy shadows of the black and green of the forest. Thus they advanced in short quick rushes with sudden pauses until they were within two hundred yards of us. The excitement by this time was almost overpowering in its intensity. I could not of course see the men, but knew by the sound that only this distance separated us, and that on the other side of the thickets and tree-trunks in front of me, fierce Malay eyes glared and peered for the hidden tiger. Then suddenly in a tree, half-way between the beaters and the guns, a squirrel raised its chattering note of alarm. Another squirrel immediately took up the cry, and the pair of them kept up such an incessant clamour that it was plain that they were scolding an intruder; it was obvious also that the intruder was within a few yards of them. The tree from which they uttered their defiance was situated in a ravine-like depression in the forest, exactly the sort of place in which a tiger, or any animal, would seek a refuge from the invasion of the beaters. The chief shouted to the men to move in upon the place, and the long line swept inwards and enclosed it in a semicircle. By this time the length of the line had so contracted that the men were nearly shoulder to shoulder. Only a hundred yards or so separated them from the guns, and it was therefore practically impossible for any animal between them and us to escape. The Malays now advanced foot by foot, and in an almost breathless silence. Then I saw something move stealthily under a fallen tree, whose dead leaves prevented me from getting more than a glimpse of it, and that, too, a glimpse not so much of it as of the place from which it had stirred. It saw me as soon as I saw it, and, knowing itself to have been discovered, a great, gaunt wild sow rushed out and dashed past me. The nearer of the beaters heard it and dropped on their knees with their

spears thrust forward to receive it. "Here he is! Here he is! Steady! Hold steady!"

For a space not a man moved; probably not a man breathed. Then I shouted that the animal that had come out was only a pig, and that the tiger had not yet shown itself. "Pig," they roared up and down the line, "only a pig"; and again the line moved forward to beat out the few remaining yards that separated them from the guns. But when they reached us not a sign was there anywhere of the tiger.

Excited questions were yelled on every side. No one knew what had happened. What everyone failed to understand was why no one had fired. The men thronged round the place where the old sow had passed by me, and leant upon their spears examining the tracks and mournfully shaking their heads. Their heaving chests, twitching muscles, and unnaturally contracted eyelids told of the intense nervous strain which they had undergone.

Had anyone seen or heard the tiger, and who had first raised the alarm? In reply to this, several men spoke to having heard the tiger, but no one had actually seen it. Every man of them indignantly repudiated the suggestion that he could have mistaken a pig's grunt for a tiger's growl. Malays know the two sounds so well that such a mistake would be most unlikely. Several pigs had been seen, but no one had taken any notice of them. When we asked the men who declared that they had heard the tiger how they accounted for its having escaped unseen, they pointed out that when the squirrels had given their alarm we had all taken it for granted that they had seen the tiger (whereas it was probably only the sow), and that when the beaters closed in upon the ravine they had left the forest on either side unguarded. This of course was perfectly true, and their explanation of our failure was probably the correct one.

Some of the more enthusiastic of the Malays proposed that the ground should at once be beaten over again, but midday was past and it did not need a second glance at the majority of the men to see that the excitement, rather than their exertions, had so exhausted them that they were not fit to undertake another drive. Moreover, even if the tiger had really been in the ground covered by the first drive, it by no means followed that it would be there by the time that the beaters were ready to line up again. We decided therefore that we must give it up. We

covered our disappointment as best we could, but our long high-strung excitement had had such a miserable ending that one might have noticed an almost hysterical catch in the laugh of more than one man.

This was the most sporting tiger-drive that I have ever seen. The fact that no tiger was seen and that possibly no tiger was near us does not in any way detract from the sport. We all believed that the tiger was there : the guns thought that a tiger which was aware of their presence was being forced to come towards them ; and the beaters felt that they were impelling forward an animal whose desire was to charge back through their ranks. If the drive had ended by a tiger being shot, it would not in the slightest degree have added to the excitement that marked the duration of the drive. I have shot a tiger in a drive that had not a tenth of the interest of this day. Accompanied only by Malays I have occasionally had to follow wounded tigers on foot through nasty country : as I have said above, I have heard the *selawat* answered in royal style ; but nowhere else have I seen such an intensity of feeling and excitement. With this the number of men employed had a great deal to do. It is seldom that one requires more than thirty or forty beaters, whereas in this case fully two hundred men were engaged. The amount of magnetic feeling, where the excitement was communicated from unseen unit to unseen unit throughout the forest, was enormous, and the air vibrated to the unuttered excitement of the men.

It is in a drive where a line of men armed only with spears advances thus determinedly upon a tiger, that you realise how powerful a brute it is that they are assailing. From the safety and height of a tree or an elephant's back, you may shoot tigers with safety ; but when you come down to the ground, and either advance on foot to meet the tiger or wait on foot for it to be driven up, the feeling comes home to you of the marvellous strength and activity that are combined in that beautiful frame. It may be within a few yards of you, perhaps, seeing all that you do, and itself unseen. It can steal noiselessly through the forest where you can only move with crackling of leaves and breaking of twigs. You know that, when the occasion comes, that wonderful lithe body can come with lightning speed through the thick tangled growth that hampers and impedes your every movement. Finally you know that at close quarters a man is

as helpless as a child against the overpowering weight and strength of an animal that kills an ox at a blow.

There is little doubt that almost every one has a peculiar sensation of the almost god-like beauty, power, activity, and strength of a tiger. A tiger will overawe and make conscious of his inferiority a man who would be unaffected by the bulk of an elephant. The feeling is, however, elusive of description, and I can perhaps best explain it in the words of a most charming French gentleman (now dead, alas!) who was once manager of a great tin-mining company in Perak. I well remember his coming into the Tapah messroom where the Europeans of the district used in those days to take their meals. We had just finished lunch when he entered in a state of tremendous excitement. Walking alone and unarmed along an unfrequented bridle-path through the forest he had walked almost on to a tiger. He gave us a most vivid narrative of the encounter; how the tiger had been lying down concealed in some long *lalang* grass beside the path, how he was within ten yards of it before he saw it, how then it rose and looked at him, how it yawned at him, how it then walked slowly across the path in front of him, and then stopped and looked at him, again yawning; and how it then deliberately walked away into the forest whose depths finally hid it from view. I cannot attempt to imitate the beautiful and forcible diction that Monsieur C. had at his command, for the plain facts that I have thrown into a single sentence received from the narrator a majesty of style and a wealth of colouring and detail that cannot be reproduced on paper.

Someone asked him whether it was a big tiger. It is his answer that illustrates my meaning.

"Well, Messieurs, I cannot say if he is a big tiger. My eyes see that he is big; but I cannot say how big I see him to be; and if I say how big, it is perhaps that I tell you a lie. But I can tell you, Messieurs, how big I *feel* him to be, and I can tell you the truth. When he is standing there in front of me, I tell you that I feel he is not less than thir-r-ty feet high."

GEORGE MAXWELL

CHINESE LABOUR

(FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S POINT OF VIEW)

To be coherent, any scheme for the mitigation of South African troubles must be founded on the principle of the essential unity of that country, though the English people can hardly be blamed for overlooking this fact when South Africans themselves so continually lose sight of it. That essential unity of destiny and of interest must be the *grondwet* of the nation building here, if the edifice is to stand secure ; for though it is true that there are here five independent States and three Protectorates (including Swaziland), not all the political tinkering of man can set physical geography at nought, and Nature has conjoined them all. This is the first principle to be borne in mind in any attempted solution of the African Sphinx's enigma, and it is because of this principle that Chinese labour on the Rand is of such importance, since it affects all South Africa in a vital point and not the Transvaal alone.

It cannot be too often repeated that it is not only the Transvaal which is concerned, but South Africa as a whole and in an almost equal degree. It is true that when the question of Chinese labour was first put forward (and it originated, be it noted, in Rhodesia and not at Johannesburg), all the rest of the country took alarm and was bitterly opposed to it. It is equally true that, except under certain conditions, the whole country would be as bitterly opposed to it to-day. But, given those conditions demanded unanimously by all for the protection of all, and South Africa as an entity is penetrated with the conviction, come to against, not with, her original inclination, of the necessity of the present importation of Chinese labourers to her own largest and most general interests. She has not come light-heartedly to this belief ; it has been forced upon her by the

inexorable logic of her needs, and this being so, her wishes and opinions should not be carelessly set aside.

South Africa may be pardoned for having assumed that the whole question had been settled once for all, not to be thrown back into the melting-pot of party politics. The subject had been threshed out on a thousand platforms and in as many papers, explained from every point of view and justified, cavil by cavil, until it had seemed impossible that anyone in England could be still in ignorance about it. The animadversions that were kept up she took calmly, considering them to be mere party tactics, the froth on the waves of a general election, with nothing of serious intent behind. Now, however, it appears that she was wrong in her estimate, that interference is still intended, that she must fight over again a battle which by every right ought to have been decided long ago, and this although she needs all her time and all her strength to deal with other pressing problems of her development. Tariffs, freights, railways, unification, and Kaffir legislation, are sufficient to tax the powers of any young community without adding to them such a fundamental difficulty as labour, a difficulty which has been discussed already *ad nauseam*.

The whole question of imported labour falls naturally into two parts, each of which parts are equally of importance to South Africa. First, there is the need of imported labour at all ; secondly, the way in which that labour should be admitted. The two are best considered apart, seeing that they are the two aspects of one subject ; but it must always be borne in mind that the first can never stand without the second and that, though the aspects may be two, the subject is for ever one.

It is generally maintained by the Anti-Chinese at home that the question of Chinese labour was first raised by the mine magnates of the Rand, anxious to increase their dividends at the expense of the poor Kaffir (some say of the poor British), who had yet sufficient independence of mind to refuse to work for anything less than a living wage. Since the mines are gold-mines they ought of course to be able to afford the highest wages, and the cry of *too much expense* from delvers of gold can never be entertained. The point as regards white labour can be set on one side ; it is only advocated by a few, and those few are men who compare mining in Africa with mining in America and Australia. The labour is all white in both

these places, they contend ; the newcomer and not the aborigine is the man there to go down the mines. But they do not add that in neither country is the aborigine in sufficient strength to be anything but a negligible quantity and that in neither country has he stamina enough, even were he numerous enough, to undertake the work. America and Australia are both white men's lands, but South Africa is, and must always be, a black man's land ; for the Kaffir, unlike the Red Indian and the Australian aboriginal, has the same power of resistance, the same rate of increase, as the white invader, and so long as he maintains his equality in these two things so long will South Africa remain what it is, his country *par excellence*. It is not the Caucasian who is the backbone of this land ; it is the Kaffir. In the British territories south of the Zambesi there are less than one and a half million white inhabitants, but of the black there are about five millions. And the black population stands at this figure in spite of the continual checks which obtained until late years, in spite of settlers' wars, in spite of inter-tribal friction, in spite of witchcraft, in spite of diseases brought in by civilisation and to which uncivilised peoples are peculiarly susceptible. In spite of these ravages during the whole of last century, the figures of the census still stand at these five millions, and with numbers approximating to these there can be no question as to South Africa being anything but a black man's land.

Now the most numerous class in any country is always the class to whom the unskilled labour is relegated, and most especially does this law hold good here where civilisation and barbarism live cheek by jowl. The Kaffir occupies the position of the most numerous class, though too many efforts are made to move him out of his sphere and to leave it to the white man. The white man in refusing to be a party to any such levelling policy is actuated by no tyrannous impulse, for English nature is not changed by a three weeks' voyage, but by the simple instinct of self-preservation. For if South Africa be a black man's land, it is a white man's land as well, seeing that the greatest Kaffirphil (to coin a vile hybrid) has never suggested that we should clear out of our conquests and abandon them to heathenism, and seeing that the white man thrives in this country as well as the black, that he can bring up his children here and his children's children and the race suffer no deterioration of physique. But whenever two races of varying colour and

(still more potent) of varying civilisation live side by side, the one of the higher mental ability must take the lead and be the overlord, or be swamped in the greater volume of the lower. The theories of the Social Democrats cannot be put into practice in a case like this without the disappearance of the higher in the lower. So long as the black preponderates and is at a lower level of mental culture, so long must South Africa be an oligarchy and not a democracy. The Governments do not employ gangs of white men to do the rough work along the railways. The Boers do not employ white men for the hewers of wood on their farms. None but the meanest of the whites,—and there are not enough of these to make any appreciable difference in the labour-supply—none but the meanest of the whites would accept such work, because for the white man to descend to the level of the Kaffir and to share his avocations would be suicidal from a racial point of view since it would destroy his superiority, familiarity breeding in this instance, if not contempt, at least presumption.

What is to be the final position of the Kaffir in South Africa is another matter. As to that, Mr. Rhodes's dictum, "Equal rights for every civilised man south of the Zambesi," is the only reasonable conclusion that has been reached as yet, but the reasonableness depends on that important adjective *civilised*. To cram a Kaffir's brain full of Greek roots is not to civilise him. His whole nature requires disciplining, morally enlightening, ballasting, before he can be called civilised, and that ought to, must, occupy some considerable time, considering that cannibals are still alive in Basutoland, that deaths by "smelling out," by being tied over an ant-heap to die by inches, are reminiscences of but yesterday. In these pages, however, no attempt is being made to deal with the ultimate destiny of the Kaffir, but only with facts about him as he is to-day.

Granted, therefore, that the unskilled labour of this southern continent is the speciality of the Kaffir, why not use the Kaffir instead of bringing in strangers to usurp his functions? Nothing could be more desirable if there were sufficient Kaffirs to meet all the requirements, but is this the case? In this country the supply of labour has never been equal to the demand, though the reason accepted up to a few years ago, and still largely urged, has been that the Kaffirs, though in sufficient numbers,

are too lazy to come forward and do their share of the day's work. It is true that the Kaffirs are happy-go-lucky, irresponsible beings, with no notion of continuous toil, but work of a sort and for a short space of time, say six months out of twelve, they are ready enough to undertake, and this theory seems borne out by the census returns. The statistics as regards the native population are still very scanty, so much so that even the Native Affairs Commission could only obtain the most general figures. A fair average to take, however, is that which allows British South Africa about five million natives (including the sick, the aged, and the infants in arms), of whom some 800,000 are able-bodied men. For Portuguese East Africa the figures are far more unreliable, but Portuguese East Africa may be put down as the home of some million natives, of whom 100,000 may go to swell the 800,000 to a total of 900,000 possible workers. Of these men there are in continuous employment between 400,000 and 500,000, but as a Kaffir rarely works for more than three to six months in the year it follows that, taking one part of the year with another, the whole of that contingent of 900,000 possible labourers must go to work or the figures of the continually employed would not be maintained, and that the numbers are not susceptible of much improvement except by the natural increase of the population and the advance of civilisation which will conduce to longer consecutive periods of industry.

The manner in which the importation of Chinese originated is some evidence in favour of this theory of the non-existence of any reservoir of labour in South Africa itself. It was not from the wealthy Rand, it was from Rhodesia, from the small, struggling mines there, that the cry first came for some supplement to the indigenous labour-supply. Rhodesia was a young country, and of native population it was the least wealthy of all the colonies, for the perpetual warfare that had ravaged it before the occupation had decimated the inhabitants. The little community of Englishmen scattered over the land found it impossible to make their requirements tally with the assistance forthcoming and at the same time to develop the land. Several experiments were tried to meet this need. Arabs were brought in, Somalis were tried, but one and all failed ignominiously. Coolies from India were discussed, but here the Government of Rhodesia and the Government of India were unable to see eye to

eye, and the scheme fell through. Then it was that, everything else having been tried and found wanting, the idea was first mooted of labour from China. But the thought of such an innovation alarmed the whole continent, and the protests were vigorous indeed. In a country like Rhodesia, where the mines are numerous and isolated, it was recognised how impossible it would be to keep a sufficiently strict hand upon the coolies and to ensure their repatriation at the end of their term of service. The public voice was unanimous that severer supervision was necessary than could be guaranteed by the peculiar conditions of Rhodesia, and the proposal had to be abandoned.

It was not renewed until the end of the war revealed such a shortage of native labour on the Rand itself that some alleviation of the distress became necessary. But on the Rand the conditions were different from those obtaining in Rhodesia. The whole mining industry is situated in one small area, and it became easy to both devise and enforce regulations that would safeguard the colonies from any dreaded influx of Chinese population. The colonists, too, were beginning to feel more severely than ever the pinch of the continual lack of labour which became more pronounced as every year brought fresh developments. It was realised that it was necessary to the whole of South Africa that Johannesburg should be provided with the labour it required, and that for two reasons. To begin with, every accession of wealth to Johannesburg meant an increase of prosperity to the rest of the country in creating fresh openings for the unemployed and in increasing the volume of trade. Secondly, the Rand was bound to get labour in some way, even if it had to pay double the current rates of wages. But in this, its necessity of finding hands, a necessity which it was in the best position throughout South Africa to satisfy, lay the danger that the increased trade its enlarged prosperity inaugurated would find the rest of the colonies in no position to profit by it, because the indigenous labour by which alone that increased trade could be taken advantage of would have been absorbed by the mines themselves. In this way Johannesburg would profit at the expense of the rest of South Africa, unless some alternative could be devised by which its supply of labour could be met from some other source, and this source seemed to lie most naturally in China. The question of Chinese labour had indeed become a burning one for the whole country.

Nor were they any panic statistics that committed the future federation to the importation of coolies. From the very beginning the shortfall in the labour-supply had been the principal factor in the slow development of these colonies. So long ago as 1894 Mr. Rhodes, in moving the second reading of the Glen Grey Act for the improved training of Kaffirs in civilisation, referred to the difficulty then experienced by the Boer farmers in this very way. He had often, he remarked, heard them accused of the most flagrant indolence, and it had struck him as strange that any could be so indifferent to their personal interests as these were supposed to be; but on examining more closely into the matter he had found it was not so much laziness as lack of labour which lay at the root of the trouble. The farmer could never be sure, after he had put himself to great expense to cultivate his soil, that he could obtain a sufficient supply of Kaffirs to reap his harvest and recoup his outlay for him, and this uncertainty had bred discouragement in all. The restriction of enterprise from this cause was giving anxiety even in 1894, in what was an undeveloped country catering to a foreign State still in its infancy, with few interests of its own except immense barren farms feeding the minimum head of stock, and one great industry at Kimberley which absorbed the greater proportion of what labour was available. The conditions that were so cramping in 1894 have intensified sevenfold by 1906. The paralysing effects of the war are wearing off, and the whole country stands on the threshold of a tremendous expansion. It has only to be reflected that the measure of this expansion will be determined entirely by the amount of the labour forthcoming, to realise of what immense importance to South Africa as a whole is the colony of Chinese coolies at Johannesburg which sets free a corresponding number of Kaffirs to take up work in other parts of the country.

The undertakings requiring the services of the Kaffir are very, and increasingly, great. In Rhodesia, to begin with Benjamin, there are over 2,000 miles of railway. The Cape to Cairo has now crossed the Zambesi, and draws its labour from the natives north of that river, but throughout South Africa the need for more railways is urgent, because since there are no rivers the entire trade travels by the locomotive. Cape Colony must be connected with Natal, Kimberley with Bloemfontein, Swaziland with the sea and with Johannesburg, and other feeding lines must be built to open the land for agriculture.

To return to Rhodesia, the whole of its foundations are gold-seamed, and there are small gold-mines scattered through the length and breadth of the land, all of them in poor circumstances and unable to afford anything too extravagant in the way of wages, and all of them dependent for their continuance on their Kaffir miners. At Wankie, near the Victoria Falls, is the beginning of what will be a centre for the output of coal which is of almost more importance to a young country than gold, for on it depend cheap railway-rates, and on these in their turn depend rapid development. In close proximity to the coal-fields of Wankie iron, that most useful of metals, has been found, so that the place only wants exploitation to become a great industrial and manufacturing district. Silver and lead are also known to exist, some £14,000 worth having been exported last year; the diamond is suggested in the vicinity of Gwelo and copper around Victoria. Beyond the riches that lie below the soil are the riches of the soil itself, for here, as in Cape Colony, the farming industry will be the backbone of the country. There is water in Rhodesia, the soil is fertile, land is cheap; tobacco-growing bids fair to become a lucrative source of income if it can only be cultivated in sufficient quantities; potatoes thrive there as nowhere else; flax is a new branch of cultivation that promises well; fruit-trees, especially the citrus and stone varieties, respond to the least encouragement. There is a great future before agriculture in Rhodesia provided the cost of production is not so high as to swallow up all the profits. At present this is largely the case, and is sufficient reason why so little has been heard of the industry hitherto.

To meet the needs of all these various occupations there are barely 100,000 black men between fifteen and forty years old, and of these only some 50,000 work continuously.

Unlike Rhodesia, which has equal mineral and vegetable resources, the Orange River Colony is principally devoted to farming, but it is mineralised like the rest of South Africa and, besides diamonds, is known to have stores of both coal and iron. Stock-farming however has been its staple occupation as yet. So good is much of the veldt that it will more than repay the trouble of irrigation in the dryer parts and, considering that the conquered territory, for instance, is the most productive tract in South Africa, some system of irrigation which will bring other areas to like fertility must undoubtedly be the first care of every govern-

ment in that colony. But to meet all its demands the Orange River Colony possesses merely some 47,000 possible day labourers, of whom only 23,000 are in steady employment.

In Natal there are, roughly speaking, some three-quarters of a million of Kaffirs, a more favourable estimate than in the two preceding colonies ; but in Natal the natives are allowed to rent small farms from big estate-owners, and in cultivating these small farms in a Kaffir's slip-shod way, and for their own use, their services are withdrawn from the market ; so that in the long run Natal is no better off than her sisters in this respect, though she acknowledges as great a diversity of interests as they and as exacting a future. Her coal-mining (and she supplies the Royal Navy to a small extent) is a growing industry, and in its wake will follow the exploitation of her iron-mines. She has marble-quarries too, and shale-beds rich in oil. Her agricultural possibilities, ranging from sugar and coffee to wheat and apples, have been turned to more advantage than those in the other colonies, but there is still room for considerable expansion. In the case of Natal, however, her tropical cultivation will be undertaken by Indian coolies and not by Kaffirs, so that her development will be less of a drain on indigenous resources than that of the rest of South Africa.

In Cape Colony, the oldest and the most advanced of the South African States, the need for labour is daily growing. There are diamond-mines (absorbing yearly 10,000 Kaffirs from all parts) coal-mines, copper-mines ; while iron and silver are known to exist as well as deposits of petroleum and nitrates, only awaiting the next wave of enterprise to be taken in hand and profitably worked. Stock-farming and agriculture in all its different branches are practised and can be practised with still happier results. Merino sheep and Angora goats are especially successful, and there is a wide scope for the multiplication of these flocks as both can thrive in parts, and in years, fatal to good stock for slaughter. Greater care of the surface of the soil is urgently needed, however, if the country is not to be gradually bereft of its fecundity, for at present the rains, uncertain, it is true, but torrential when they occur, delve themselves channels (or sluits), in the dry, crumbling earth, washing it away into the gorges and down to the sea, and leaving the rock beneath bare and devoid of fertility. Some organised effort is required, such as the immediate checking of these sluits on formation ; but to deal effectively with this

danger an army of men will be necessary for some time. The country, too, is crying out for a better management of its water-supply so as to enable land, now only carrying mediocre crops or a few head of stock, to be utilised to its full advantage. Fruit growing in particular is a special branch of agriculture with an opening future before it in Cape Colony, for much closer settlement can be carried out by means of fruit farms than by either stock or cereal farms, seeing that the profit of an orchard by the acre is far greater than that of either of the others.

So far the immediate prospects of mining, agriculture, irrigation, and communications alone have been considered, but manufactures must also be taken into account. As yet these are only in their infancy, but with any improvements in the development of the country along the lines already discussed, manufactures are bound to come into early importance and to make their claims upon the labour-market. There are certain manufactures which must without fail leap into prominence before long, certain manufactures for which the whole of South Africa is well adapted. The leather trade, the saddlery and harness, the boot and shoe trades, belong of right to the country, besides those in candles and soap. Wine and spirit making, fruit drying and preserving, the manufacture of furniture and vehicles, all of which are already prospering in a small way, must develop rapidly until they supply the whole of the South African market. When once iron begins to be mined, agricultural implements and much of the machinery required, instead of being imported as now from abroad, will be produced on the spot, to be followed by the manufacture, certainly of woollen goods, and perhaps of linen as well. Nor are any of these developments fore-shadowed further off than the next few years should see accomplished. The country is ready at last to advance along the lines of material prosperity, is ready at last for the inflow of the white settler whose advent always heralds an immediately greater demand for Kaffir labour. But in all South Africa, including those parts reserved for natives, such as Basutoland, and including Portuguese East Africa which contributes a large quota, there is a Kaffir population of but six millions, or 900,000 able-bodied men, providing a continuous supply of 450,000 upon whose shoulders must ultimately rest the success of every new venture; and the Rand mines, also during the next few years, will be able to absorb more than half of that labour for themselves. Of the Transvaal's

resources, ambitions, and endeavours I have not written. The fact that the Witwatersrand alone will soon be able to account for over half of the indigenous labour-supply is sufficient without piling up the other requirements of the Transvaal to enhance the dilemma.

Chinese labour on the Rand, therefore, is a vital issue, not only with the Transvaal but with South Africa as a whole. To withdraw it will mean the dislocation of the labour-supply throughout the Southern Continent. It will mean the competing of State against State, of industry against industry. The jealousy and heartburning brought in by such a condition of affairs will not conduce towards early federation. The outbidding for his favour will be the worst thing possible for the Kaffir, who is being ruined by over-attention. But the one to suffer most will be the farmer, the man who is toiling against the greatest odds in this land and for the smallest profits. Johannesburg will secure as much labour as it is possible to get, because it has the longest purse; yet even Johannesburg will feel the pinch and be unduly cribbed and cabined. If this will not be the case, why is there a sort of panic in that city,—men winding up their affairs and leaving the place, the number of the unemployed increasing almost daily—as the result of the Liberal Government's pronouncements concerning African matters?

But South Africa, in admitting the need to herself of the admission of Chinese labour, has not lost sight of the dangers threatened by such a step. She has attached a stringent condition to her acquiescence, and has insisted upon such a strict oversight of the imported coolies that it will be impossible for any of them to escape from the Rand to any other part, and upon the universal repatriation of them all as their term of service expires. Rather than run any risk of a Chinese settlement she would withdraw her consent to the whole venture, recognising that, though the absence of the coolies would be a severe loss to her, in practically ruining her hopes of expansion, yet ultimately their perpetual presence would be a still greater menace to her prosperity. It is a matter on which she has taken long views. There are already, she argues, sufficient racial problems in this country without introducing a new one. The Dutch and the English are still like oil and water, for the better understanding that had begun to grow up between them is rapidly going to pieces once more. "Who is the rebel now?" said a Boer to an English settler

when the new policy of the new Government at home was announced, coupled with dark hints as to still further innovations, and with a censure of the representative of the British Crown through the storms of the Anglo-Boer war. There is no really racial or religious hindrance to the amalgamation of Dutch and English in South Africa; but if events progress along the way they are moving at present it will take the presence of that other and far more sinister race intolerance, that of white against black, to bring the two into a final harmony. What place the Kaffir is to take in South Africa in the future is beyond all others the danger spot in this country, whether he seeks to raise himself by a general war, rallying around some man of his colour with the genius for leadership (and the Zulus, the Matabele, and the Basutos have given proof that they can produce such), or by a long and bitter political struggle. Either way the horizon is heavy with thunder-cloud. The introduction of yet another racial question to complicate further these already complicated issues would be the height of folly. The Chinaman as a bird of passage is all very well, when his passing can be turned to account; the Chinaman as a permanency is altogether undesirable. And, lest South Africa should have any doubt as to the unwisdom of mothering all the coloured races, even for the sake of the immediate welfare of her own children, she has been given a standing object-lesson in the case of the Indian coolies over-running her villages.

Natal, so rich in tropical products and unable to persuade the Kaffirs to give her the reliable labour to turn them to account, imported natives from India to take their place. The plantations, especially the sugar-plantations, prospered, but the coolies, when they had finished their term of service, showed no inclination to return whence they came. Some, even before their contracts terminated, escaped into the interior, and set up for themselves. Industrious, thrifty, with no wants, with the acute, over-trained brain of centuries and the commercial immorality from the same cause, they have overmatched the Kaffir at every turn and undersold the European. From Natal they have spread into the Transvaal; they hold the entire retail trade in fruit and vegetables; they are formidable competitors of the small English trader in every branch, and their money-lending propensities are inveterate. Despising the Kaffir, they have won his hatred in return, and the jealousy of the white

man into the bargain. South Africa, finding out her mistake too late, has stopped their importation and tried to counteract their unwholesome influence by forcing special legislation upon them, only to earn the remonstrances of the Indian Government and to raise another burning question between herself and the Imperial Government.

Now, what the Indians are, the Chinese are also in an even greater degree. They are the hardest-headed business men in the world, older by several centuries than the Indians; their industry is proverbial, their plodding patience with small profits inimitable,—all very good qualities in themselves but dangerous to introduce into a land occupied already by two different races, of which the one is too uncivilised, and the other too impatient, to exercise them. Let the lessons be inculcated by all means, but not by the example of a third race which, in practising them, would take the bread out of the mouths of the other two, for the Chinaman would speedily oust the Kaffir from much of the employment that suits him best; what is more, he would oust the poorer class of European from all the petty trades. Such a cockpit of four antagonistic races as South Africa would present after a few years would be a spectacle for the world.

Besides this, the influence of the Chinese who, though abnormally civilised in some ways are yet painfully uncivilised according to our ideas in many others, would be very bad on the Kaffirs with whom they would come constantly in contact. The Kaffirs need to be protected from evil influences and ill company as much as any children with half developed minds. Our own example to them often leaves a great deal to be desired: they take more readily to our vices than to our virtues; but that is no reason why they should be exposed to another and a different contamination. Because they learn to drink from us is no reason why they should learn to smoke opium from the Chinese, or to band themselves in secret societies for the subversal of our rule. The political methods of the Chinaman are pernicious as well as peculiar. It is evident that under no consideration can South Africa agree to any mitigation of the compound system which has worked satisfactorily at Kimberley for nearly twenty years without degradation to white or black. It is absolutely necessary that the conditions on the Rand be such as to obviate any chance of the Chinese evading their contract and settling

themselves in the country, any chance of their leaving the mines until they are shipped back again to China. Nor is there the least reason why such conditions should be incompatible with humanity. It is to the material interest of the Rand magnates that their coolies should be well treated, comfortably housed and fed, and secure of justice. Were the Chinese to find themselves downtrodden and unhappy, they would neither renew their contracts nor advise their friends to come and join them, since the Chinaman, is of all men (as I have said before), the most level-headed in business affairs.

To sum up, therefore, it cannot be urged too strongly upon the Imperial Government that this question of Chinese labour is one affecting the whole of South Africa. Without it, because she has not sufficient indigenous labour to take its place, her rapid development will be greatly retarded, if not put an end to, as well as the growth of a kindlier feeling among her inhabitants so largely dependent on prosperity. But the safeguards with which she has hedged this labour must be maintained unimpaired, or she will have nothing to do with it, whatever the sacrifice to herself. Here is the whole of the case in a nutshell, and she should be left to decide it on her own responsibility.

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